00029511

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016

SECRET HISTORY

OF THE

COURT AND GOVERNMENT OF RUSSIA

UNDER THE

EMPERORS ALEXANDER AND NICHOLAS.

By J. H. SCHNITZLER.

Ephphatha, quod est adaperire. *Mark*, vii. 34.

29511 ae

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

S S L 5

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1847.

-1.1.1.07
Sci/Sec.
29511

ref.
354.41

PREFACE.

My early career was devoted to the service of Russia. Since that period, while engaged in the preparation of a large Encyclopedia, I have also made that country my constant study. The result of my vigilant and long-continued observations I now submit to the public.

In entering upon the arena of contemporaneous history, I have had at once to contend with the paucity of materials, with the prejudices of men variously biassed, and with my own hesitation in some cases, arising from a fear of departing from the most rigorous impartiality.

But I will be honest. It is better to remain absolutely silent, if we cannot represent things as we have seen and comprehended them.

So long as my researches related chiefly to those sciences which are auxiliary to history, I was in no great danger of displeasing the Russian Government; and it has indeed been imputed to me as a crime, that I stood, or was supposed to stand, in favour

with it,* though that supposition rested only on the fact that some honorary distinctions had been bestowed upon me, which I had taken no steps to obtain, and which might justly be regarded as a result of the suffrages of the press and the public. In writing history, fact involves fact ; facts call forth opinions; and when those opinions are condemnatory, the majesty of truth and virtue must not quail before the received opinions of society, or the fear of giving offence. Respect for truth is the glory of the historian.

In the execution of this work I have scrupulously endeavoured to fulfil all the duties of the historian. I have therefore stated the truth in some cases

* I do not mean this as a reflection on the author of "La Russie en 1839." M. de Custine has done me the honour to notice me in various parts of his work—an honour so much the greater, because it is shared with me but by few, except the excellent Karamzin. In one place, volume ii. p. 335, he says, after having given a short extract from "La Russie, La Pologne, et La Finlande." "Je dois dire ici une fois pour toutes, que ce bon et utile ouvrage, protégé à Pétersbourg, est extrèmement partial, du moins dans la forme du langage, condition nécessaire si l'on veut se faire tolérer en Russie, ce qu'on écrit touchant ce pays."

I cannot plead guilty to this accusation of partiality, which, however, does not pass the bounds of lawful criticism ; but these rights have been overstepped in a most unjustifiable measure, in a long article on "La France Littéraire ;" where the attack made upon me is the more reprehensible, that the writer had under his eyes the proof of the falsity of his own assertions.

In 1831 I published a pamphlet on Poland, which was far from pleasing at St. Petersburg. Since which moment I have written nothing further on the subject, excepting sundry articles for my Encyclopedia ; and I must observe that, at the very time of my pretended favour at Court, I chose for my coadjutor in that literary labour, M. Theodore Morawski, one of the abettors of the insurrection in 1831. So far did my complaisance extend !

where it was as painful for me to write it, as I knew it would be disagreeable for some parties to hear it. I trust that I have not withheld praise where it seemed to me to be merited; but I have not allowed myself to be deterred from exposing much that is evil, for evils must be exposed before they can be remedied; and I have presumed to conceive that from my honest dealing national advantages might result. Great events are sometimes consequent upon small causes; and Providence makes use of weak instruments to effect large designs. I am sincere when I proclaim myself free from all animosity, and from all bitterness of spirit.

The following is a brief statement of the circumstances which led me to undertake the present Work.

My life has been for the most part quiet and studious; but even a quiet life is sometimes varied by busy scenes of action. I passed four years in Russia. Scarcely had I arrived at St. Petersburg, when I became witness of one of the most important events which the annals of that country have to record. After having been present on the field of conflict of the 26th of December, 1825, I was called to assist in the painful events which followed. Then many hidden evils were brought to light; many political secrets were laid bare; many characters, which had remained in obscurity, were tested and tried. I was in a good position to observe, and to obtain information worthy of credit. My personal

observations and knowledge gained during this time, and during my sojourn in Moscow at the period of the coronation of the Emperor Nicholas, were recorded in a journal of the day; but facts, drawn from other sources, have, during the long interval between that time and the present, thrown much additional light on the matters there detailed.

I ought certainly to escape the accusation of having given hastily and crudely to the public a work which is the result of lengthened study. Twenty years have elapsed, during which I have had time enough to collect all possible facts, to reflect, to weigh, and to compare them. For a long time I hoped that personal memoirs of some of the parties concerned most deeply, and informed most fully on the subject, would have been made public, which would have confirmed or controverted the official statements contained in the publication of the trials of 1826. This expectation has been disappointed. With the exception of one work, by a Russian of great merit, but who abstains from entering upon the results of the conspiracy, nothing important has yet appeared upon this subject.* The countrymen of Pestel, of Ryleïeff, and Troubetzkoï, not to cite the more noble victims, Michael Orloff, Alexander Mouravieff, and Nicholas Tourgueneff, have to this day preserved the deepest silence upon an event of immense importance, and the consequences of which have not yet fully transpired. It is left to those less closely concerned to give to the world their knowledge of the

* See Note (23) of the Second Volume.

facts in question. Nor are there wanting reasons to shew that an impartial and honest foreigner may be qualified, even better than a native of Russia, for laying before mankind the entire and simple truth.

I long since had promised such a work to the public. In my "Statistique Générale de la Russie," after having given the principal facts of Alexander's reign, I stated in a note published in 1829, that "the unhappy events which marked the close of this reign are not yet fully brought to light. Revelations have still to be made concerning them. Having been an eye-witness of the chief events of that bloody struggle which succeeded it, I shall at a future time attempt to place it in its true point of view, and shall offer to history materials drawn from the most unexceptional sources."

To fulfil this promise has been the object of the present Work; but to this I have not confined myself. I have prefaced my account of the revolt of 1825, and of the long trials which followed it, by a brief general sketch of Russian history, more particularly of the reign of Alexander, and by a circumstantial account of the death of that prince; on which subject false opinions even yet prevail. I have also endeavoured to blend with my history a picture of Russian manners and society; and, while referring to existing institutions, I have pointed out the want of others, the establishment of which would be most beneficial to that country.

In order to give a full and clear conception of the judicial establishments of Russia, I have detailed very fully the trials of the conspirators. I have pointed out the code of laws due to Nicholas, together with a general view of Russian legislation.

In tracing the history of the secret societies, I have been led to examine the various passions which lie concealed under an exterior of immobility; and in treating of the mutinies of the peasants, I have been drawn to the examination of the great question of the emancipation of the serfs.

I have attempted to atone for the compulsory silence of Muscovite writers on prohibited subjects; and have dared to proclaim in the ears of the mighty eastern nation, and of its powerful government, what Europe expects before she will fully and heartily acknowledge Russia as a member of her family.

In many respects Russia may be considered as still a closed country. I have therefore attempted to aid the interests of science and literature, by giving in my notes and appendices much varied information, not easy to be procured, on account of the rigour of the press, and the paucity of Russian publications. My own difficulty in obtaining materials has been sometimes immense, but perseverance has enabled me to attain my end.

I hope to accomplish the undertaking to which many years of my life have been already devoted. I have studied Russia deeply, and I am anxious to lay

the complete results of my labours before the public. The position which Russia is to hold in Europe, is the greatest question perhaps for the future to unravel; its solution will be of vital importance to France, and still more so to Germany, on which country the empire of the czars will press with all its mighty weight as soon as Poland shall no longer oppose an obstacle. As regards France the question is one of preponderance, of influence, of equilibrium; but for Germany it is one of life or death, of independence, even of nationality. It is high time to awake to the perception of this menacing future, which has recently been so strikingly pointed out by Thiers and De Lamartine;* it is now incumbent on all to study an empire, the position of which is calculated to awaken such fears. Nature has granted to her "une place ingrate mais immense sur le globe," says the incomparable painter whom we have last cited; we might add to his remark, that that territory, once a desert, is now covered with inhabitants, and that in no part of the globe is the progress of population more rapid. At the accession of Peter the Great, only a century and a half ago, Russia possessed but sixteen millions of souls; now she has sixty millions! It is not chiefly by conquest that she has gained this prodigious increase; for during that interval the superficies of the empire has only been augmented to the extent of a fourth. It is to the proportional increase of births over-

* "Histoire des Girondins," tom. i. pp. 293, 294.

deaths that this immense addition of population is to be mainly attributed; a fact worthy of the serious consideration of all Europe. The same increase may be remarked in the revenues of the empire. At the death of the great reforming czar, the entire revenue scarcely exceeded two millions and a half sterling; at the commencement of the present century it had amounted to fourteen millions, and at the present date it cannot be computed at less than twenty millions. Nor need we point to the gold mines of the Ural and the Altai, to explain this mighty increase.

It is in Russia especially that the future lies hidden, and where the mighty events even now preparing will be enacted. Meantime, what are we doing to prevent our being taken by surprise? Where are the proofs that we have deeply and seriously studied this great subject? Our historians, our master-spirits display their genius, their talent, and their imagination, in placing in vivid colours and in bold relief the annals of our own period, and, by the might and the *prestige* of their powers, engross and enchain the thoughts of readers upon France, which is indeed the country most worthy of their curiosity as well as of their love, but which is at least better known to us than any other. It is true that no history offers so much dramatic interest as the French, and that the study of no other is attended by emotions so deep and strong; but the study of that of other countries would rectify our

ideas on many things, would throw variety into them, would extend our horizon, and would furnish us with knowledge on which our future security may greatly depend. Yet this great field lies around us almost unexplored.

If this Work should succeed in inspiring Russia herself with some good principles and intentions, and if it should be found also to render some service to my countrymen, my reward will be perfect.

My immediate object is completed in the present Work, but my task is by no means wholly accomplished. Russia, like a citadel well guarded, conceals from us a multitude of secrets: would we possess ourselves of these, we may have to recur to our motto,

"Ephphatha," or, "Be opened."

July, 1847.

SUMMARY

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION.

Historical Sketch.—Origin and probable destiny of Russia. . 1

CHAPTER I.

Alexander I., Paulovitch.—His Character and Reign. . . 37

CHAPTER II.

The last year of Alexander's Life.—His Death at Taganrog. . 78

CHAPTER III.

Interregnum.—Generous Contention between two Brothers. . 143

CHAPTER IV.

Accession of Nicholas I.—Military Revolt at St. Petersburg. . 201

CHAPTER V.

Opening of the Reign of Nicholas.—News of the Provinces. . 252

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

NOTE

1. On the Title of the Czar (referred to in page 9). 309
2. The House of Romanoff (alluded to in page 10). 314

NOTE		PAGE
3.	Diplomatic Relations between Russia and Turkey (alluded to in page 26).	361
4.	The Character of the Russians according to the European Pentarchy (alluded to in page 22).	362
5.	Pansclavonism (alluded to in page 32).	367
6.	The Progressive Aggrandisement of Russia (referred to in page 43).	374
7.	Political Pretensions of Russia (alluded to in page 43).	376
8.	Prince Czartoryiski (alluded to in page 48).	377
9.	Corruption (alluded to in page 51).	381
10.	General Count Araktchéieff (referred to in page 52).	382
11.	The Treaty of Tilsit (referred to in page 58).	398
12.	The Holy Alliance and Madame Krudener (alluded to in page 72).	400
13.	Character and Private Life of Alexander (referred to in page 87).	404
14.	Religious Tendencies of the Emperor Alexander (alluded to in page 73).	408
15.	Elizabeth's Physician (referred to in page 102).	410
16.	Taganrog; the Imperial Residence (referred to in page 103)	411
17.	The Tomb of Sophia N —— (alluded to in page 108).	415
18.	State of Crimes in St. Petersburg (referred to in page 163).	416
19.	Count Alexis Orloff (alluded to in page 224).	417
20.	Critical Remarks upon some Works relating to Russia (referred to in page 234).	417
21.	The Emperor Nicholas in Presence of the Rebels (referred to in page 243).	421
22.	General Miloradovitch (referred to in page 247).	422
23.	Küchelbecker and the Academy of Tsarkso-Sélo (referred to in page 256).	426
24.	The Family of the Princes Galitsin (referred to in page 269).	427
25.	The Tschinn and the Tchinovinks (referred to in page 270).	427
26.	The Germans in Russia (referred to in page 271).	431
27.	Letter to the Archbishop Augustin (referred to in page 278).	432
28.	Description of Nicholas by Prince Kozlofski (referred to in page 279).	433
29.	Russian Finance (referred to in page 291).	436
30.	Military Establishment of the Emperor (referred to in page 296).	439
31.	The Lieven Family (referred to in page 297).	440
32.	General Count Peter Tolstoi (referred to in page 297).	443
33.	Additional Details concerning the Insurrection of St. Petersburg (alluded to in page 421).	444

SECRET
HISTORY OF RUSSIA
UNDER THE
EMPERORS ALEXANDER AND NICHOLAS.

INTRODUCTION.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.—ORIGIN AND PROBABLE DESTINY OF RUSSIA.

MODERN civilization is the result of three elements, each powerful in itself, but now completely blended with each other. These three elements, originally distinct, were, the Roman genius, with the superior social institutions of a nation whose date is remote, combined with the intellectual light diffused by the Greeks, themselves inheritors of the wisdom of the East; German liberty, a powerful restorative when spread among a people of large active capacity, but become enfeebled and inactive, and needing that revivifying power which proceeds from a sense of personal dignity, deeply enrooted in the Teutonic race; and, lastly, the Christian religion, — that admirable system of spiritualism, to which man, as he arrives

at the knowledge of his true destiny, owes those ideal and mysterious tendencies, which raise him above matter, and cement the spirit of brotherhood between him and his fellow beings. The practical wisdom of the old Romans, the noble, free, and dauntless spirit of a barbarous ancestry, and the boundless hopes and law of philanthropy grafted on the Gospel, are the elements which have formed the nations of Europe, and created their present character,—which has obtained for them an immense moral advantage over the people of Asia, whom they conquer and subjugate through greater moral and intellectual strength, rather than by physical superiority.

Community of faith is a bond which draws together all the Christian people of the Continent into one family, and which, notwithstanding passing differences, unites them. Centuries ago it founded an empire in the midst of the spiritual empire we now behold, in which, be their origin, their language, their peculiar genius what they may, all are governed by the same ideas, the same sentiments, and the same hopes.

Russia, which now forms one of the provinces of this spiritual empire, was long beyond its limits. Hence its distinct and very opposite character; hence that wide difference which exists in many respects between her people and those of the western portion of the Continent. One of the three elements of which we have spoken was entirely wanting by her; another she enjoyed but remotely, and in a small degree; and the third had reached her under a particular form,

which diminished its power of effecting intellectual emancipation.

The dominion of the majestic people of Rome never stretched to the north of Europe and Asia. Those chill and desert regions remained unpenetrated by the ancients, who, enjoying the blessings of a warm sun, were little tempted to extend their sway too far into the frigid north, which remained enveloped in mystery to them. They regarded it with superstitious dread, believing it to be the seat of the ancient magi; they entertained a vague idea that vast mineral treasures were to be found there, but to seek to take possession of these,—which they believed to be guarded by griffins, giants, and monsters of every kind,—was an idea remote from their thoughts. Hence the eagles of the Cæsars never were carried thither.

Again, the German invasion, which was destined to give new youth and vigour to the languishing and enervated Roman world, took its direction also in another course. If it left a scattered population sprinkled over the face of ancient Sarmatia, that circumstance must be attributed to the enterprising spirit of individual stragglers separated from the general horde,—true knights-errant,—who halted on their way wherever temptation offered or booty appeared. These, fearless of danger and regardless of distance, settled where they pleased, and could not but exercise a powerful influence over the feebler people among whom they settled. Such northmen established themselves at Novogorod and at Kief; but though, in the immediate

vicinity of those places, and for a limited time, they wrought a strong effect upon the social manners and organization, they were too few in number to stamp their own character lastingly; and after a time they became confounded with the Sclavonian race. Within a century, little trace remained of this small Germanic infusion into the Sclavonian tribes.

With respect to the third of those elements which have formed and trained Western Europe,—while Rome, the metropolis of the West, spread her Christianity among these nations, Russia, on the other hand, received the Christian faith from Constantinople, whose despotic masters, not recognising the essence of the law of brotherly love, had made Christianity an instrument of despotism, and whose clergy, by foolish and paltry disputes on barren theories, had deprived the religion of its pure and noble incitements and of its true character and nature. They had stifled the spirit of religion under vain formalism.

Modern civilization in the West advanced from Italy and Germany. Russian civilization sprang from a very different source. It emanated from the Greeks of the Lower Empire—a people wasted, worn out, fallen into second childhood, bowed to the earth under despotic rule, and with whom religion, become debased, had lost her regenerating power. Before Constantine the church crouched as the humble servant of the throne, adding to its brilliancy, but never offending or controlling it; whilst in the West, on the contrary, a priest, elevated on the tomb of St. Peter, became the

guardian of Christian liberty, and never feared to oppose his shepherd's crook even to the sceptres of kings, when he believed spiritual interests to be endangered.

Russia was not only beyond the confines of the old Roman world, but without the limits of the Latin world, in the extended sense of the term. By the first exclusion she remained unendowed with that ancient culture, and those noble institutions, which, even in our days, have not lost all their value; and by the second exclusion—by standing out of the pale of Catholic Christendom and of the spiritual empire of the popes, those defenders of thought and representatives of the spiritual principle in the midst of the violences of the middle ages—she was left without the essentially civilizing influence of Christianity; and the generous passions and noble impulses of our ancestors found no echo in the midst of her vast, thinly-peopled deserts, although these were visited, as we have stated, by errant warriors, who shed something like a reflection of their own adventurous and heroic spirit upon them. Russia knew nothing of the feudal system,* that vast lever and mighty power of the West, which, whilst doubtless it oppressed the weak, yet in atonement it protected them from greater oppression than

* The system of appanages established first at Kief, and afterwards in other large Russian principalities, certainly does not merit the name, and, assuredly, serfage, which is of much later origin in the country, is not feudalism. Feudalism contained within itself a pledge of progress. In considering an institution, it is just to view it at its commencement, and not in its decrepitude.

its own, forming an organization at once powerful, pervading, and complete, which could not but exercise a civilizing power.

Russia remained sequestered from Europe. Isolated in her Christianity, as in her nationality, she did not respond to the cry of religious enthusiasm which roused the inhabitants of the West, and sent them to the Crusades. The great influence which the holy wars exerted, mingling nation with nation, opening to each the views, knowledge, and thoughts of the rest, and originating the spirit of chivalry, was unknown to her. And great, indeed, was her loss; for chivalry, establishing the empire of woman, softened the rough manners of the age; and, exalting the obligation of an oath, subjected the brutality of the warrior to the laws of honour. Religion found an ally in chivalry; loyalty and devotedness to a cherished object promoted morality and self-restraint; and a rule of conduct, superior to that of the barbarian, was thereby established.

All this was lost to Russia; but this was not all. Implicated in the schisms of the East, and thus completely cut off from the vast Catholic family, she became deprived of the assistance which she needed at the most disastrous period of her history, when the hordes of Ghengis Khan left the deserts of central Asia to pour their destructive torrent upon their foes: unable to resist and unaided, she could only bow under the infliction, and she was fain to submit to the yoke of this cruel slavery. It may be, that not all

the efforts of the chivalry of the further side of the Continent, had it been brought to her aid, could have saved her at that time; but at least the struggle would have been prolonged; Christian heroism would have been created under it, and the fall, when at length it arrived, would have been less complete and less debasing. The very consciousness, on the part of Russia, that Europe was the spectator of her resistance, the certainty that all the sympathies of the civilized world would go with her, would have excited her courage, and generated a sense of honour and dignity in a population, which, if not very chivalrous, has always shewn an ardour for military glory, with a strong attachment to the faith of its ancestors and the land of its birth. But no appeal was made to the valour of the West, and no spontaneous impulse arose there to defend the cause of Muscovy. The people of northern Russia were still Pagans, and those of the south, known to Europe as schismatics, were scarcely deemed Christians. They were left to their own resources, and the two fatal battles of 1224 and 1237 brought them entirely under the dominion of the horde of Or, or Ord, and of the Khan of the Steppes.

A prostration of two centuries' duration succeeded, and left profound traces of its effects on the Russian character,—traces which were the more readily impressed, because although the origin of the nation was as purely European as that of the Celts and Germans, the national spirit, as we have before seen, had been debased and crippled by the yoke of Byzantium.

At this time Russia was almost forgotten by the West. At a later period, the name of Russia was given to a portion only of the region which had once borne it. A new power arose,—a power still Pagan, but vigorous and formidable. Lithuania had enriched herself with the wrecks of the principality of Kief, and was in possession of the capital of St. Vladimir: she now stood between the old seats of civilization, and the Sclavonian people lying upon the confines of Europe and Asia. This country overawed all surrounding ones. A portion of Russia had fallen under her dominion, and she caused the Teutonic races—that advanced guard of the Latins—to recognize in her a powerful enemy. It was hardly to be expected that Catholic Europe could feel any interest in what was passing between these barbarians. But these barbarians, themselves, soon yielded to the influence of civilization, and a Pagan prince recognized the truths and the law of the Gospel.

Jagellon, actuated by powerful temporal motives, entered, not into the communion of the Eastern church, which was already that of a portion of his subjects, but into that of the West, which had sole dominion in Poland. His possessions at this time included the Russian provinces of Kief, and Galicia, and the recently acquired kingdom of Hedirge. Kief, the holy city of the Muscovites, was his metropolis.

The Poles were enemies of the Muscovites, whom they regarded with sovereign contempt, and with whom they were frequently at war.

To trace the history of each separate state, or kingdom, in old Muscovy, could not be very interesting or important at this day, when all the Russias, with the exception of Galicia, are consolidated into one vast empire. But a fact, which must not be left unnoticed, is, that the union of Lithuania with Poland caused the latter to become the mortal enemy of Muscovy.

After that union, Poland was the constant antagonist of Russia, and often wrested valuable provinces from her. The warriors of her oligarchical republic, have more than once penetrated into the sacred enclosure of the Kremlin* at Moscow. Within are the tombs of princes, czars,† metropolitans, and martyrs, honoured and beloved by the nation. Long was the struggle maintained between the Russians and the Poles; at length it terminated in the complete ascendency of the former. In later times another contest arose, and many are now living who can remember the entire subjugation of the Polish nation.

A new light burst upon the Russian people in the reign of Ivan III., and the aroused spirit gained strength under Ivan the Terrible, fourth sovereign of the name: with the accession of the house of Romanoff, the nation appeared to have found its vigour; and Europe looked on in surprise, as the Russians, so lately

* In the ancient Sclavonic, kreml, or kremen, signifies stone; and any fortified place is a kreml. Various Russian towns have their kremls. That of Moscow is, by pre-eminence, *the* Kreml, or Kremlin.

† See Note (3.) in the appended Notes on the signification of the title Czar, which is still accorded to the Russian sovereign.

groaning under the ignominious Tartar yoke, now vigorously assailed Poles, Swedes, or Crimean Tartars. It was no longer possible for the rest of Europe to remain ignorant of the existence of such a people; and its alliance was sought against the common enemy, the Ottomans.

Still, however, under the earlier sovereign of the house of Romanoff, Russian manners and Russian government stood in striking contrast with the West. Religion was a barren formalism, a shelter for every superstition; but inimical to all spiritual life, to all investigation, and all progress. The clergy, grossly ignorant, exercised no further influence upon the faithful, than that which the performance of their ritual could insure them. They entered upon idle and subtle questions, devoid of serious interest, but they seldom or never preached to the people; and thus lost a most powerful means of forming the character of a nation, and imbuing it with the truths of the Gospel. The sovereign was worshipped by the people with their heads bowed to the ground. In the important and imperturbable gravity with which he went through formalities, both religious and political, he called to the mind of beholders rather one of the monarchs of the Old Testament than one of the crowned warriors of the Latin empire, whilst the patriarch resembled a chief priest of the ancient Jews, rather than a Roman pontiff. The Popes were often great statesmen, fond of the arts and sciences, sometimes addicted to pleasures, and not even abstaining from such as were most

incompatible with their profession; — not so the patriarchs.

Under the Russian despotism an aristocracy could scarcely be said to exist. The so called nobles were slaves in presence of a mighty lord. Slaves placed, indeed, at different degrees in the scale of rank, but all humble, creeping, cringing, restrained in all they did by the principle of fear. If the national formula, "The czar has decreed, and the boyars have counselled,"* ever carried meaning with it, it was only in cases of exception; and even so far back as under Alexis Mikailovitch, father of Peter the Great, it had become a dead letter; besides men were only boyars at the pleasure of the czar, and the dignity was not transmitted by hereditary descent. There existed, indeed, a privileged class, composed of princes who traced their issue to various branches of the family of Rurik, and of simple nobles, of more or less ancient hereditary descent; but that class, also, was nothing without the favour of the czar, and without being employed in the service of the state, to which it was admitted only by him. There was nothing chivalrous or independent about such nobles. The proud devices which characterize the escutcheons of French peers, and which not even the arbitrary spirit of Louis the Fourteenth could prevent their transmitting to their descendants, are never seen on those of the Russian nobility. In the inferior Russian classes a servility still more abject, but perhaps less revolting, because

* Velikii Goçondar onkasal; boïaré Vrigovorili.

less voluntary, existed. The class which the French denominate *la bourgeoisie*, then amounted only to some hundred thousand families, and the peasants who tilled the land and who since the reign of Boris Godonnoff had been attached to it, and transferred with it, were in a state of the most profound ignorance; the conditions and monotony of their existence, together with the ignorance of the clergy who should have raised and taught them, being barriers to any hope of change.

Even in the superior classes of society, life was dull and without attraction. Woman possessed no influence upon man; unlettered like himself, and with no objects worthy of engaging the activity of her mind, she spent her time in petty intrigue, in paltry struggles for precedence in matters regulated by custom, and in exterior devotion. The necessity of observing the minutiæ of stringent and never-ceasing etiquette, the excessive sensibility of ridiculous self-love, and the constant fear of offending either her domestic lord or her sovereign, were the principles and feelings under which her life was passed, and by which her actions were determined.

Such was the state of the Russian people when Peter the Great appeared; a man of iron will, of vast and powerful genius, and possessing something very like an instinct for civilizing a nation. Thus qualified, and with violent passions, he threw himself as an apostle into the midst of his nation, which he determined should, voluntarily or perforce, undergo a

transformation. In the first place he resolved that she should no longer remain isolated and alone; that, he regarded as the principal cause of her barbarism. He would blend her with the rest of Europe. He saw that progress generally tends to prosperity; and he determined that the Muscovites should awake from their lethargy, and should assert their claim to a share of prosperity and riches. He conceived an aversion for some of the external badges of Russian isolation; long beards, oriental caftans, and furred caps were prohibited. He made known to the higher classes his desire that women should mingle in society with men; he sent the sons of his boyars to travel abroad, and he himself, when he entered upon his foreign expeditions, carried with him such of his own servants as he considered most qualified to derive benefit and improvement from their contact with other people. He sought to obliterate from his nation the oriental character,* and Catherine II. declared, that he was assisted in his attempt by the inconsistency which then existed between the habits of his people and their climate. She said that, "he introduced European manners and European costumes amongst a European people." He attracted many foreigners to his court and empire. It had already been the custom for sovereigns of Russia to protect themselves with a foreign body-guard, which he now employed to train and discipline the army. He did more; he sought to spread over his country, and

* He found it necessary in his commission of laws, to make the express declaration, that "Russia is a European power."

to place, in every rank and occupation of life, able foreigners, to mould her on the pattern of Germany, Holland, and France. In the arsenals, the workshops, the various institutions, and at court, foreigners were found. They formed, also, part of the council of the sovereign; schools and colleges were placed under their direction, and immigrants received everywhere imperial favour and encouragement.

It may be well conceived with what an aversion, jealousy, and terror, the Muscovites, proud in their own ignorance, would regard those swarms of civilizers, who, professing a religion different from their own, and speaking a tongue unknown to them, came to settle in their cities. The poor natives, who could not distinguish one language from another, called all indiscriminately Germans, or "Niemtzi," a term of opprobrium which to this day is applied by them to a foreigner in a spirit of rancorous hatred.

Resistance was organized under high auspices. The clergy, little united and abject in spirit, did nothing openly, but they fostered the rebellion which was growing up among the Strelitz. They were doubtless not ignorant of the machinations of Peter's eldest son, carried on in concert with the czarina, his mother, who was confined in a convent. The firm resolution and admirable perseverance of the great reformer, Peter, conquered every obstacle, and defeated every attempt to oppose his will. Russia was inoculated with foreign manners; the higher classes at least took the new impression. The lower classes are always

less easily reached, and less disposed to change, than their superiors.

Peter the Great, however, shewed himself in one particular a true Russian. He attached more importance to interests than to principles. Whilst all material progress excited his sympathy to the highest degree, the idea of elevating and purifying the moral character of his country, and of contributing to her social and religious perfection, entered little into his thoughts. He saw in civilization rather an element of strength or power, than a means of increasing the dignity of human nature. The *moral culture* of his people was overlooked by him*; but when their *material interests* were concerned, nothing escaped his attention and his indefatigable activity. Knowledge and power were almost synonymous terms in his estimation; and as he conceived that riches are the basis of power, he spared no means which could improve commerce, foster industry, and acclimatize the arts. He sought further, to recognize and find representatives of every branch of knowledge, to put all the parts of his dominions into reciprocal intercourse, and to bring within reach of his subjects all the benefits that could be derived from the waters around his shores, on which fleets appeared as if by magic. All became life and movement. The sea, that grand medium of international commerce, which unites nations rather than separates them, was perpetually in his thoughts. His highest aims were connected with it. Not only did he found St. Peters-

burg, on the Gulf of Finland, which became an open port to Europe, but he made a point of becoming master of the mouths of the rivers Neva, Duna, Dnieper, and Don, as he was already master of the Wolga and the Dwina of the south.

The plan of his general policy was grand and comprehensive. To profit fully by the mighty rivers of his country; to govern the Baltic and turn it to account; to confine the Swedes to their peninsula; to enfeeble Poland by fomenting its divisions; to profit to the largest extent by the decadence of the Ottoman empire; to draw under the sphere of his own influence the Christians of Europe and Asia, who wore the yoke of the Turks or the Persians; to spread his influence and to extend his future commerce to those regions with which a lengthened line joined his own dominions, and even beyond them; to gain for himself weight and consideration in the affairs of the West,—such were the projects of the son of Alexis, embarrassed and increased by all the difficulties which his passion for reform had heaped up around him.

And his projects have been completely carried into execution. Each one of his successors has contributed to their accomplishment; and that often, in spite of his own want of ability or will to do so, and simply because he acted by the spring which the genius of Peter had introduced into the government. But it was a woman and a foreigner who more than any other individual contributed to fulfil these in-

tentions. Russia has been made known to Europe, and the Russian genius has been imbued with the European spirit. The struggle was long and painful. The Russian element regained a little under Peter II., who went to reside in the old capital. Anne then returned to St. Petersburg: under her and the child who nominally succeeded her, the conduct of affairs remained in the hands of Ostermann, Biren, and Munich; but on the accession of Elizabeth Petrovna, the foreign and especially the German influence again received a check, notwithstanding the professions of that princess to walk in the traces of her father, and to accomplish all his designs.

It was Catherine II., well termed by the Prince de Ligne Catherine the Great, who completely carried out the views of the illustrious monarch on whose throne she sat. A foreigner by birth, she understood the wisdom of proclaiming herself a Russian at heart; and she maintained herself with her Muscovites against her weak spouse, by professing herself all Russ. Her designs were profound: she opposed French elegance to German pedantry. She caused her courtiers to feel and to enjoy the fascinations of French life, and she found her people more willing to receive lessons from foreigners, when those foreigners were no longer Germans and Hollanders. She conciliated the whole nobility; and the *mougies* (for so the peasants are termed), delighted by her affability, and by her reverence for that which they themselves revered, doated upon her with adoring affection, and in the ardour of their

attachment gave her the title of "Matouschka," or mother. Catherine took the utmost pains that her subjects should lose the recollection of her foreign extraction;* she chose the instruments of her policy amongst the Russian people: Orloff, Galitzin, Potemkin, Romantzoff, Panin, and Bezborodko, were all natives. She selected also the guilty abettors of her sensuality amongst the Russians. The debauchery of her life and court, whilst it inflicted a deep injury upon the manners of her people, does not seem (as it might have been anticipated would happen) to have interfered with the magnitude of her general projects of government.

Under Catherine II. the West began to respect that power of whose existence it had formerly hardly condescended to be conscious. The Marquis of Argenson remarked, "We overlooked its greatness in our contempt of its ignorance and barbarism, but it has become formidable, and it behoves that its excess of power should be repressed."

Times, indeed, were changed. To deny the greatness of the new power was not the way to suppress it. Europe was compelled to modify, nay, to alter her system. The pride of the old monarchies, which might feel disposed to resist this *parvenu* amongst themselves, found itself compelled to make concessions. Peter the Great had, by his diffusion of knowledge and

* 'Bleed me, bleed me!" she said one day to her English physician, "that there may not be one drop of German blood left in my veins."

civilization, constituted Russia a European power, and Catherine II. caused it to be recognised as such by her armies and her diplomacy. She took care that her imperial title should not be questioned.* Spreading her forces over land and sea, she communicated so exalted an opinion of her power, that her alliance soon came to be courted. The partition of Poland was the immediate cause of a close confederacy between her and the sovereigns of Prussia and Austria. In Austria the representative of the proud Cæsars was then a woman, Maria Theresa, of less capacity than Catherine, but whose virtuous and well-ordered life was the strongest condemnation of that of the Russian Czarina. The compact of iniquity, unequalled in history, and most disastrous to Europe, was concluded; and from that time the bond of a common guilt has united these three Northern Courts. The recent suppression of the republic of Cracow, the last remaining fragment of dismembered Poland,† has drawn this alliance still closer, and it now stands in formidable, though silent menace, to the West. The partition of Poland was the first revolution in the European system. Catherine was the cause of a second, the humiliation of Turkey, which thenceforth lost its rank as one of the great powers.

Her victories upon land and sea deeply affected the Christian populations who groaned under the empire

* See the notice of her title in the "General Statistics of Russia," p. 439—449.

† Treaty of Vienna of Nov. 6th, 1846.

of the crescent; and the Greeks, and others, happy to find co-religionists in men who dealt such heavy blows under their eyes, began to dream of deliverance. Catherine also dreamed, but it was of making another partition and appropriation in the regions of the Danube and the Bosphorus; and had it been then possible, she would have consummated it, in concert with Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, who had entered into an alliance with her with that object, and who had been to St. Petersburg to pay his court to her in person.

Joseph II. was not the only crowned head who found his way to the capital of the North. The King of Sweden repaired thither, and a few years later several other sovereigns of Europe visited Catherine. She entertained, also, the heir to the Prussian throne. The visit of the Austrian Emperor to the Court of the Czarina drew the attention of all Europe, which was further enchained by another remarkable event. At the conference of Jeschen, in 1779, Russia, a sovereignty hardly known a century before, was chosen arbiter between the Emperor of Germany and Frederick the Great. The sudden appearance of two Muscovite armies, in Italy and in Holland, under Paul I.; the exploits of Suwarrow; and the imperious language which the czar held, established the new state of things, and gave to the power of Russia a preponderating influence in Europe.

The eastern empire became the protector of some small states, namely, Sardinia, Bavaria, Wirtemberg,

and Baden; and was, moreover, in a position to dictate to the Germanic body. The example of Paul was not lost upon his successor. Himself seated upon a throne, which had not been hitherto transmitted by fixed laws, but according to the will of violence, and sometimes to one, sometimes to another, member of the imperial family, native or of foreign blood, Alexander declared himself, nevertheless, the champion of a determined legitimate descent, and undertook the defence of the old monarchies, against the French government, then hostile to that principle. Nor was this enough to satisfy the ambition of the new born power. At that time, when the French empire was working prodigies, Russia held the balance between France and her numerous antagonists. Napoleon accepted her mediation between himself and England, in 1803; and he conceived that it would be in his power to divide the civilized world with her. When he fell, Russia, as a power, gained not only by the achievements which she, in concert with other powers, had wrought, but by the personal qualities of her sovereign, who played a chief part in the congress of crowned heads held at Vienna. From that time little has been done in Europe without Russia. She was called to aid even in the pacification of Spain, though it would seem difficult to conceive how a country at the other extremity of the continent could be concerned in the matter. The Pentarchy of Europe was constituted, and in this association of the great powers the empire of the czars did not hold the lowest rank.

Under the present reign the peace of Adrianople in 1829, and other acts of skilful diplomacy, have still further increased its weight. The preponderance of Russia in the European scale is assuredly "a great fact" at present; but does it rest on a solid basis? Is it to be regarded as permanent, or is it factitious and ephemeral?

Russia is more than the half of the surface of Europe; and ten times that of France. The country is continued into Asia, almost without bounds, and forms nearly a third portion of the globe. If exact figures are wanted, the surface of European Russia, given in geographical miles, contains 92,689 square miles; that of Asiatic Russia contains 254,199 square miles; and that of American Russia contains 17,500 square miles,—a total of more than double the surface of Europe, and nearly a sixth of all the countries on the globe, habitable or uninhabitable. The Russian possessions in Asia and America, with all their disadvantages of climate, will, by the decree of nature, never be possessed by a dense population, or large means of maintenance. The present proportion of population in those parts is only three souls to the square verst, a measure about two thirds of an English mile, whilst in European Russia there are twelve souls to the square verst, and in France sixty-five to the square mile. But this vast colonial territory, adjoining the mother country, forms one whole with her increasing capabilities and resources. A fifth-part of Siberia, taken at a low estimate, is, however, sus-

ceptible of good cultivation, and the soil of other parts conceals treasures which offer vast temptation to the cupidity of man. Gold and silver, platina, and the coarsest metals, are all found within its bosom. When we turn our eyes on Russia in Europe there are still vast wastes, entirely uncultivated, which stretch beyond the extent of human vision. But notwithstanding the unproductiveness of many parts of the territory, the empire of the czars reckons fifty-six millions of subjects; and, in order to obtain a just idea of the importance which this new world may one day acquire, it is only necessary to recollect, that, with regard to the population, the births are as one to twenty-five or to twenty-four; whilst in France the proportion is only one in thirty-four or thirty-five, and that thus the annual increase of souls in Russia is two millions, while in France it is not quite one million. Such is the rapidity with which the Russian population increases, that perhaps not more than eighty years would be required to double it. Again, there are other elements to be considered in the calculation of Russian power. Portions of the soil of Muscovy are extremely fertile; its productions are abundant and varied; and the genius of the people is fruitful in resources. In the absence of creative powers, which certainly we cannot accord to them, we must still grant them wonderful aptitude for all kinds of work, and an extreme facility in imitation. Remarkable for native vigour, they easily adapt themselves to all situations. Gentle in character, alert and

hardy in danger, they are at the same time greedy of gain, distrustful, and submissive. If they have the faults which are the results of a degraded condition, their portraiture has its bright side also. Lovers of intrigue, and possessed of a moral subtlety equal to their physical capability of adapting themselves to all things, they by no means shrink from a lie, or from a dishonest action; but they are capable of being made better than they are. The civilization of Russia is as yet young, and it is active and ambitious. The country, in all its vast extent is united and compact, and subject to one unvarying rule, to which religion, notwithstanding its want of light and clearness, is a constant support and sanction.

Of Russia M. de Bonald has said, "This empire, situated on the confines of Europe and Asia, bears hard on both; and, since the Romans, no empire has shewn greater power of expansion. It is ever thus with all states where the government is enlightened and the people are barbarous, and where a happy conjunction subsists between the exquisite skill of the workman and the extreme aptness of the instrument."

This judgment is full of truth; and in considering the power of expansion and the progress of this colossal empire, it may not be from the purpose to ask, what, before that theatre of fresh, active, energetic life, are France, Germany, or Italy,—old seats of civilization in its decrepitude? Or what is Britain herself, isolated as she is from her vast colonies?

But, on the other hand, we might ask with equal, nay, with greater force:—are there to be found in Russia those vigorous characters, those powerful spirits which create greatness in a nation? Can her numerical force fall back upon this moral spring? And again, is there hidden no principle of dissolution in her colossal proportions? Is there no omen of instability in the character of her civilization, which is more superficial than deep, which rests more in external luxury than in moral culture, and which is not based on that only sure foundation, institutions and manners? We might, however, see the flower *safety* side by side with the nettle *danger*.

We well understand why, at the present moment, Germany is filled with alarm. The Russian question will probably be solved in Poland. On the subject of Poland, we have but one observation to offer here, as it will be our duty to return to it again in a later part of this work. Either Poland will become a danger to Russia, or Russia will become a danger to Europe. Let us put this observation into other terms. The Emperor of Russia is occupying himself with an attempt to assimilate two people. His attempt will succeed, or it will fail. M. de Chateaubriand has said, "The Russians will never extinguish Poland except by making her a desert." But before the silence of the desert, or of death, can reign in the midst of a vast heap of ruins, how many more struggles, how much more of suffering, will not take place! If the work of assimilation should succeed, Russia will have made

a great advance. She will have extended her confines to the heart of Europe; and when the kingdom of Poland shall have become the van-guard of the Russian power, can it be supposed that the remaining dismembered parts of the former kingdom will bow to German dominion? The Germans and the Poles have always been hostile to each other. It is probable that the vast Sclavonian empire we are supposing, would have only an ephemeral existence; its very immensity would encourage those principles of dissolution which perhaps even now lie hidden within it. But mean time what would become of the balance of power in Europe? What would become of unhappy Germany? How would its states be preserved from the talons of the double-headed eagle, which never forsakes a prey on which she has pounced? The very apprehension of such a danger, which, chimerical as it may appear, is assuredly possible, attests the immense power of the growing empire.*

Without, however, dwelling on abstract speculations upon future possible dangers, without attempting to lift the veil which hangs over unborn events, what

* Perhaps the *sine quâ non* for the acquisition of Constantinople by Russia, would be found in a strict alliance between her and France. But is such an alliance possible? It would involve the rupture of the three northern powers; and Russia is not yet in a condition to brave this rupture. So long as Turkey remains feeble, Russia will be content to *protect* her; but let the moment arrive, when the question comes respecting the division of the prey, and she will be there before all, the most voracious among the eagles; nor are her intentions unknown, thanks to some official despatches which we shall bring to light as we proceed. However, in the present position of things, there appears to be no accelerating principle, nothing to prevent the con-

a spectacle is presented before us of this new eastern world — long regarded as a mere desert, and now peopled by sixty millions of one race, united under a strong and intelligent government, which is imbued with all the progressive principles and policy of the West! What may this new birth on our continent portend? Doubtless Russia is destined to become the theatre of a fresh scene in human civilization.

A portion of Europe so large in extent, and which feels her weight, will not choose to act the part simply of a spectator of the movement of ideas, nor will she see herself for ever condemned to imitate without attempting to create.

Hitherto, indeed, she has contributed little to the common good, and the general advance of the nations: but what of that? she is still in her infancy; she has her part yet to play. In the designs of Providence, doubtless, she has her share to contribute to the common progress of the human family. To prophesy how it may be offered, would be presumption, especially when the question concerns matters of the intellect. It is difficult to conceive what new

tinuance of the existing *statu quo;* the alliance of Russia with Austria has been drawn more closely, in consequence of the late convulsions of Poland; and her relations with England have not been compromised. Whilst things remain thus, what advantage would the Colossus of the North draw from an alliance with France? We do not suppose that any proposition to this effect has been broached, or is contemplated; but we rejoice in the conviction that, were it proposed, it would be rejected; for, after all, the friendship of Germany is not without its value; and the oppression of that pacific country would not tell for the interests of civilization. The acquisition of the other shore of the Rhine would be dear-bought at such a price.

phase European civilization may wear in unborn times.

Each of the nations of the West has had a special mission, and has fulfilled it. Intellectual awakening commenced with Italy, which was the cradle of modern poetry, the mother of the arts, the seat of spiritual government. There was developed and nourished the sentiment of the beautiful—that emanation from the infinite world, towards which it again tends. Spain and Portugal mingled the caprices of the imagination of the Moors and Arabs, with the severity of the arts and classical studies. In their enterprising naval undertakings, they drew after them ardent and daring spirits; they discovered a new world, and placed it at the disposal of the old; they invented that grand system of colonization, which has become the source of immense riches and extended commerce, which has multiplied the relations between the nations of the globe, and given rise to a vast maritime movement, though closely connected with it has been the guilt of the slave system. Again, the once powerful government of Spain was that which first treated war as a science, and threw into it regularity and tactics. Holland early shewed to Europe what may be effected even against nature, by the persevering efforts of an industrious population. Whilst she set an example of intelligent labour, she also furnished a proof that it is never without its recompense; she, like her sister Switzerland, presented the spectacle of a popular government without show and pomp; she exhibited before

the old monarchies, who desired to crush her, the civic virtues of her children, jealous of their rights of every kind, intellectual, political, and religious. Germany, the mother of those barbarians who regenerated the West by infusing their native energy into the old Roman decrepitude, first fostered in her bosom independent states and cities, well constituted, honourable, and prosperous. It was amongst the German populations, which at all times highly appreciated the life of thought and intellect, and the hallowed domestic ties, that the craving of ambition for place, was seen to bow before that free and public spirit, which promoted the general social good, and which so disdainfully shook off intolerance, despotism, and dogmatism. The inclination to materialism, the taste for science, and the facility with which the spirit of man in that country falls back upon itself and draws from its own resources, has made Germany the country of philosophy, the sanctuary of literature, the laboratory where all ideas, be their origin what they may, are thrown into the crucible, to be converted to the common uses of Europe. England has had the glory of governing the ocean; of taking its extent and measurement; of uniting all people together by the ties of commerce; and of carrying Christianity, with the civilization based upon it, to the most distant regions of the globe. She has taught the practice of affairs; she has inspired the genius of great enterprises. The balance of power first was studied and taught scientifically in England; there, also, royalty, aristocracy, and democracy, always

co-existent and co-adjutant, have learned to respect each other, and have taught the lesson to other nations. There, liberty extends her influence over religion and literature. Religion is revered, and literature is free, bold in her creations, classic, profound, and elegant. France has reigned over the empire of taste: she offered an example of sociability and elegance of manners; her people, by nature graceful, were early cultivated and polished; and her elastic and rich language became everywhere that of the saloons and of diplomacy, supplying, in place of the defunct Latin, that universal tongue which draws together and unites the scattered members of the great human family. The genius of the French, quick, independent, poignant, and unfailing in resources, became the means of developing intelligences more slow than its own, though perhaps more profound and comprehensive. France certainly cannot boast of having, generally speaking, evolved original ideas; but she possessed the genius of propagating them, the art of bringing them out in a full clear light, of causing them to seize imaginations, and of converting them into an electric current which penetrates everywhere and which nothing can resist. She is easily electrified herself, and she communicates her impressions with facility: more than once her enthusiasm has led the world after her upon a career which had vainly been attempted by any other nation.

Thus each people has paid a tribute to the common advancement. We have enumerated those only who

have brought in the larger shares to the general stock. Poland and Sweden also have made their contributions. The common treasure was amassed before Russia was introduced upon the theatre, and she has freely drawn upon its wealth; nor can we yet see what it may be hers to add to it in the time to come. In the midst of so many positions already taken, it is not easy to divine what hers will be; we are reduced to mere conjecture. We may conceive that the mission of Russia will be rather material than spiritual; that it will have more analogy with that of England than with that of Germany, and perhaps resemble more nearly still the character of that developed by the United States. We are not perhaps entitled to hope that the Muscovite genius will extract from the arts and sciences secrets hitherto unknown, or, that discovering the solution of questions in religion which have not for eighteen centuries been determined, recognising on the one hand the need of authority and stability, and on the other the rights of reason, she may open to Christianity a new era, and effect that Christian renovation hitherto vainly expected, though long foretold. We cannot suppose that the czars are to found anew in Europe a patriarchal system, where monarchs shall govern without written law, by inspiration, and by a law of inward and diffusive benevolence; we cannot suppose that from the East will spring a new social organization, where all rights shall be common; but whilst such suppositions are forbidden us, one thing is clear, namely, that Russia will hereafter influence largely the populations which

surround her. The churches of the East had no protector until the opening of the present century; their children were subjected to the dominion of Turkey or of Austria; they bent humbly before the power of Islamism, or were crushed under the Latin yoke: but since Russia has given them a stimulus, the consciousness of their strength has returned to them; they have aroused themselves; they are ready to defend their rights, and to resist the oppression which hangs over them. The re-awakening of the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, of Bohemia, of Hungary, and of the Illyrian and Dalmatian provinces, is solely the work of Russia; they have been recalled to new life and action by the success which has attended that power in her attacks upon the infidels; they have seen even Napoleon bow before her; they have been touched, and the long sleeping recollections of the past have awakened within them. The Bohemians have called to mind their John Huss and Ottokar, the rival of Rudolph of Hapsburg; the ancient kings of Bulgaria, who governed also the provinces of the Danube, have lived again in the memory of their descendants; the "Krals" of Servia— the great Kral, Stephen Douchan, and the glorious defeat of 1449 at the field of Merles, have been brought to recollection; Ragusa has begun to remember her past prosperity, and to regret that she now no longer holds her place in the commerce of the Adriatic. All the numerous race which is extended from the Adriatic to the White Sea, and from Erzgebirg to the Balkan, has been in a measure regenerated, and

retouched with the noble spirit of nationality. The reciprocal position of conquerors and conquered has been changed, especially in the empire of the crescent, where the new attitude assumed by those rayahs who boldly turned their eyes towards the north, and no longer dissembled their sympathies or their hopes, broke the power of the yoke that bound them.

To resuscitate an entire race, and cause it to take its place in Europe by the side of the Germans and of the great Roman family, has been the first effect of the accession of Russia to civilization and to a place among the European powers. This work, which Poland could not accomplish, she has noiselessly and successfully pursued, and we fully believe that she will carry it out to its accomplishment. Will it, when she has achieved it, prove to her profit, or to that of some other political power or combination of powers? The future only can reply to this question: but most assuredly it will be for the general benefit of humanity and towards the advance of civilization; for, agreeably to the decrees of providence, all mental movements amongst a people lead to this result.

Russia has another task before her, in which Turkey, had she been fitted for its accomplishment, might have preceded her; it is that of blending Europe with Asia. Placed on the confines of those two quarters of the globe, she extends her arms over both. She counts as neighbours all the nomades of the steppes of Upper Asia, and the greater number of those nations which have been hitherto isolated,—the Kivains, the

Boukars, the Turcomans, and the Chinese, with whose territories she comes in contact to an extent of many hundred leagues; she is placed in contiguity with the Japanese by the maritime highway which her Alcontine archipelago forms. It was necessary that Russia should herself become civilized and European, before she could engraft on Asia the benefits of the West; and against her own will, urged by the stern and vigorous genius of Peter the Great, she underwent her novitiate. At the present time, imbued with our ideas, sharing our industry, in possession of our secrets, and animated by a perseverance peculiar to herself, and which it would seem that no difficulties can daunt, she may turn to Asia, draw it within her own sphere, and by presenting to its people new interests, she may arouse them from their lethargy, and redeem them from their religious fanaticism. She may also learn at their school, and then transmit to us, all that the imagination of the orientals and their dreamy and mystic spirit can impart, that she may revivify amongst ourselves idealism, which is sinking into decay,—quicken our poetic conceptions, which need new vigour,—and temper with a touch of imagination the dryness of our material life and the avidity of our pursuit of worldly things. Should Russia undertake this task, far from menacing Europe, she would thereby render her an immense service, and so make restitution for the benefits which she has gratuitously received. She would worthily assign for herself her place in the midst of the continen-

tal family, and would contribute in a noble measure towards the perfecting of the destinies of our kind.

This apparition of Russia upon the theatre of the world must greatly modify and change the old routine and the equipoise of power. Already its proportions are changed. Europe is, in a manner of speaking, doubled; from this results a loss of strength, which compels the states of the West to seek new points of support in Asia and Africa. Assuredly the future of our part of the world will be very different from its past.

It is a main object of the present work to consider with serious attention the Muscovite power, and how far it is calculated to throw immense weight into the balance where so many vast interests are weighed. It has been given to its writer to become a personal observer on the theatre of affairs in the East of Europe; —to be present at the inauguration of a reign, which, beset at its commencement by many difficulties, was forced to give utterance to secrets, and to expose parts of the social organization which had formerly been shrouded with an almost impenetrable veil.

To the history of the crisis of 1825, and that of the year preceding and following it, will be attached some comments, political and moral, for which that history has given occasion. Notices on that matter, which it may be useful to disseminate, will also be added. The sacred love of truth shall guide the pen which traces these lines, and no passion or pre-

judice shall be permitted to colour its statements or to modify its reflections. As without moral dignity there is no true greatness, a main subject of our inquiry will be, how far Russia adds this element to its physical operation.

CHAPTER I.

ALEXANDER I., PAULOVITCH.—HIS CHARACTER AND REIGN.

When, at the opening of the present century (24th March, 1801), the short and strange reign of the Emperor Paul closed, and his son Alexander * succeeded to the throne, the work of Peter the Great was accomplished in its essential spirit. Russia was incorporated with the European system. She had discovered and realized the value of her maritime advance; she was in possession of an extensive foreign commerce, and she commanded the vigorous industry of a population which had been fully aroused. She possessed a powerful fleet, and was mistress of the course of her principal rivers as far as the sea. One blessing alone was denied her—the sun—which the severity of nature withheld from her.

For a long course of time the emperors, czars, grand princes, patriarchs, and metropolitans of Muscovy, have had appended to their titles as such, the epithet, "of all the Russias." But the Russia of Galitets, or Red Russia, was, at the commencement of Alexander's reign, as it still is, in the hands of strangers.†

* Born Dec. 13, 1777.

† The partition of Poland gave it to Austria, together with Galicia.

The national boundaries of the empire were exposed on several points; and the new capital itself was planted on a soil which had never been by legal treaty made over to Russia. It was protected from Swedish invasion only by Finland, itself a conquered province.

Alexander, at the commencement of his reign, left the countries around him to weaken each other by their struggles together, whilst he turned his attention to the interior of his empire, where much remained for him to do. It has been said that the Russians began their civilization by introducing the superfluities of life; and the extent to which they have in many cases lost sight of the necessary is, indeed, surprising. The government had been faithful to the impressions and the impulses which were communicated to it by Peter the Great, who cared chiefly for the material interests of the nation, leaving the advance of morals and of intellect to the care of individuals, or to no care at all. It now became necessary that it should concern itself with individuals, with their spiritual conductors, and with all those who exercised any authority whatever in the country: the great task before it was to moralize the people. To accomplish this effectively it was necessary to consult the national genius, to take a lively and personal interest in the desiderated ameliorations, and by these means to direct the most powerful springs which could act upon the people.

No monarch could be better adapted to comprehend and to fulfil such a mission than Alexander.

The pupil of Cesar Laharpe acknowledged a better ambition than that of conquest, another grandeur than that of the triumphant warrior, — triumphant over the corpses with which his conquering host had strewed the battle-plain; and the Russian people, though easily led to the field, and possessed of indomitable courage, are not, in the strict sense of the term, warlike. The genius of war was not what his people required from him to meet their exigencies. Russia is possessed of a territory ten times that of France,— what does she want with arms?

Never was expectation more anxiously fixed upon the heir to a throne than upon Alexander. The prince was of majestic figure and striking beauty: his words and manners were clothed with a seductive grace; it could not be forgotten that he had been from the cradle trained by Catherine, a woman subject to all the infirmities of her sex, but yet one of those striking intelligences, who advance before their age, who understand as if by inspiration, and who are fitted to change or to renew the face of things. Catherine was an autocrat by accident,—the consciousness of her genius and her superiority caused her to be absolute; but her soul was too elevated, and her spirit too enlightened, to be closed against the liberal ideas which reached her from the West.*

* She addressed to the author of the work on "Solitude," these words, written in her own hand. "I have been attached to philosophy because my soul has always been singularly republican. I confess that this tendency stands in strange contrast with the unlimited power of *my place*. But there exists not a Russian who will say that I have abused it."

The time came when it was necessary to appoint a governor, and Alexander had been confided to the care of Nicholas Laltytroff, a worthy man, and much imbued with the advancing spirit of the age,* who chose an excellent tutor for him in Cesar Laharpe,† whom we have already named. The lessons which these personages implanted in his spirit germinated and took root there. He was not formed after the common mould of a czar. The military life which has generally offered such charms to the young Russian princes, had none for Alexander; he, unlike his brother, preferred a simple costume to the military uniform. A precocious marriage with a princess, scarcely adult, but like himself full of grace and beauty, preserved the early morals of the grandson of Catherine from impurity. All were willing to forget the unfortunate and extravagant reign of Paul, who, filled with rancour against his own mother, had acted after her death as if he desired to satiate his revenge upon her, by nullifying her labours.

Late years had been most untoward, and the accession of Alexander was hailed with sincere and universal delight. Klopstock celebrated it in an ode

* He was afterwards created Prince and Field-Marshal. He died in 1816.

† Cesar Laharpe was born in the Pays de Vaud, in 1754. After he quitted Russia in 1790, he warmly embraced the principles of the French Revolution, and afterwards he became a member of the Directory. His opinions did not prevent his being cordially received by his pupil, then become Emperor. He was at St. Petersburg in 1802; and he himself had the honour of receiving Alexander at Plessis Piquet in 1814. He died in 1838.

in which he addressed enthusiastic congratulations to the tutelary angel of the human race. Within the empire, the joy knew no bounds. When, in 1802, the Emperor visited the Baltic provinces on his way to his first interview with Frederick William III., King of Prussia, the welcomes and congratulations of his people met him on every side. His passage from Petersburg to the frontier, was like a triumphal march. At Riga the inhabitants took the horses from his carriage, that they might harness themselves to it. Even foreigners shared the general enthusiasm. A naval captain at Lubeck forced his way through the throng, crying, "Make way, make way, I must see this 'Prince of Peace.'"

The "prince of peace" was a title at that time justly due to Alexander; he proved it in many ways. War with England had been recently declared: it was his first care to effect a reconciliation. He would not perpetuate the enmity to France. The son of Paul, educated by a republican, did not inherit his father's aversion to the Jacobins; he was without prejudice against the country; and he signed a peace with her, which the first consul could have rendered durable, had he desired to do so. A treaty of commerce with Sweden was also concluded. Georgia was incorporated with the empire: hostilities were however still continued on the Persian side, but this was no very important war; and thus, almost entirely free from external embarrassment, the young monarch might have been able to fix his attention upon the interior of his

empire. Much was to be done; other things than beards and caftans called for reform.

Just, liberal, philanthropic, enthusiastic, Alexander was really worthy of the work which lay before him; yet he allowed distractions to divide his thoughts, and eventually to divert them from it: ambition was the temptation. "Vain of his own honest intentions," as Monsieur Kiers has said, he desired to make a figure in Europe, and he hastened with rash precipitation to put into practice theories which had been concerted between himself and some young friends and ministers of his choice, who were to the full as inexperienced as himself; and some of whom, for instance, the Prince Adam George Czartoryisky, had interested motives. In the accomplishment of his task he could not but meet with resistance, and with formidable obstacles. Public reforms usually clash with private interests; and to triumph over the difficulties which such interests oppose, firmness and perseverance are required, and sometimes a stern course must be pursued. The sweetness of character of the young czar, who was formed rather to be loved than to control spirits, stood in his way.

Certain it is, that Alexander by degrees lapsed into the policy of his predecessors. Foreign affairs occupied him more than those of his own empire, and his legislation was suited rather to a state in a condition of social advance, than to draw his barbarous people into light and bless them with civilization. He forsook his special mission. He began to follow the steps of Catherine, by adding

to his already vast dominions, and, seduced into frequent wars by the policy of his neighbours, this philanthropic and pacific prince added more than 30,000 square leagues to his inheritance, not counting Georgia, Jeneretta, and Mingrelia, countries of the Caucasus, which had been acquired by his father, but which were definitively ceded to Russia in his reign. He completed the conquest of Finland; thus giving his northern dominions a sure bulwark against the aggressions of Sweden; he enlarged its natural limits on the European frontier as well as on the Asiatic side. He wrested from Persia, together with a portion of Armenia, the ancient seat of a Christian population, several Mussulman khanships, situated on the other side of the Caucasus; and he brought under the power of his sceptre, the greater part of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, watered by the Vistula.*

These conquests were in part indeed the result of circumstances; they were not all the work of design; but Alexander gave himself up to the alluring temptations before him. When he mounted the throne, he was animated by the most generous resolutions, and his first act attested them. He had on the first occasion addressed the senate, charging them to offer to him a memorial on the obligation of his duties and the legitimate extent of his rights. Unfortunate was that ambition to play a part, by which he was seduced from the patient, quiet, and highly meritorious work to which it had been hoped that he would

* See Note (6.)

devote himself. Endowed with a good and feeling heart, with an imagination almost oriental, with a quick intelligence and a suppleness of mind which some have called cunning, (Napoleon termed him "a Greek of the Lower Empire;") the young autocrat's natural qualities and endowments were enhanced by a perfect education and refined manners; but together with these excellences he had his defects. His character wanted the ballast of firmness and patience, which rendered him sometimes the accomplice of wrongs which he detested in his heart. This observation is important; for it will serve as a key to some strange contrasts which will be brought under our eyes.

We shall, however, content ourselves with merely sketching some of the principal traits of the reign, both as they concern its internal and its external policy.

At its commencement, reform succeeded reform, and all Europe applauded. Alexander quickly put a stop to the system of terror, and to the absurd vexations which Paul had introduced: he disgraced the instruments who had worked out the will of that poor maniac; he repaired the crying injustice which had been committed; he abolished the terrible secret inquisition, a state court in which the Procureur-General Oboulianioff presided, a sort of grand vizier interposing between the other ministers and the sovereign. (That court, alas! was afterwards re-established.) He instituted a permanent council, and contemplated the complete reorganization of the administration of the interior; he relaxed

the rigour of the censorship of the press, and granted permission to introduce foreign works; he reduced both the taxes and the expenses of the court; and in the first year of his reign he abstained from exacting the recruits for his army, an exaction odious to those whom it affects, and therefore often accompanied with fearful violences. He applied himself most diligently to affairs, and laboured almost as much as his grandmother, who, rising at five in the morning, had devoted three hours to her people when her ministers came to confer with her. He required from all the higher officers of state detailed accounts of their proceedings; and having examined them, caused them to be published, a thing never before heard of in Russia. He abolished the punishment by torture; forbade the confiscation of hereditary property; solemnly declared that he would not endure the habit of making grants of peasants, a practice hitherto common with the autocrats, and forbade the announcement in public papers of sales of human beings; he applied himself to the reform of the tribunals; established pecuniary fines for magistrates convicted of evading or abusing their duties; constituted the senate into a high court of justice, and divided it into seven departments, in order to provide against the slowness of law proceedings; and he re-established a law commission which had been appointed by Catherine for the compilation of a code, a work then hardly commenced, but which he took much to heart. He applied himself to the protection of commerce; made regulations for the benefit of navigation, and extended

and improved the communication in the interior of his empire. He did much to promote general education, and established several new universities, with large numbers of subsidiary schools; he permitted every subject of his empire to choose his own avocation in life, without regard to restraints formerly imposed with respect to rank, and removed the prohibition on foreign travel which had been enacted in the last reign; he permitted his nobles to sell to their serfs, together with their personal liberty, portions of land, which should thus become the *bonâ fide* property of the serf purchaser. This was a most important act, for Alexander thus laid the basis of a class of free cultivators. It was under his auspices that his mother Marie Foedorovna, founded many hospitals and educational institutes, both for nobles and burghers, which will immortalize her name.

In order to assure himself of the fidelity of his agents and of their exact obedience to his orders, as well as that he might acquaint himself with the wants of particular localities, he made frequent journeys to different parts of his dominions, and, on such occasions, admitted to his person individuals of every class, and received all the petitions that were presented to him. On the first of these journeys, as he approached Kovno, he was witness to an accident. A man, drawing a boat to land, broke the cable he held, and no longer sustained by the resistance, fell violently to the earth; Alexander ran to the sufferer, raised him, and supported him in his arms

until a surgeon arrived to bleed him. In 1807 he had the happiness of being, in a more direct manner, the saviour of one of his kind, a poor peasant, who, but for his exertions, would have been drowned in the Vilia. This recollection was always precious to him; for it has pleased Providence to decree that every good action shall carry with it its own reward. A society established to encourage philanthropic actions presented to him on this occasion a gold medal, which he accepted with honest simplicity.

It could only be by giving a history of his life that his various noble designs and generous enterprises could be fully detailed, and such is not our present intention. Every action of the monarch proved the goodness of his heart, which was full of benevolence, and eager to attract affection. His spirit was perfectly liberal, and his goodness was pure. We can only cite some few facts as proofs of these assertions.

We give in his own words one of his declarations concerning serfage. It is extracted from a letter written in French to one of the most elevated persons in his dominions, who had requested an estate with its serfs as hereditary possessions: "The peasants of Russia are for the most part *slaves*. I need not expatiate upon the degradation or the misfortune of such a condition. Accordingly, I have made a vow not to augment the number; and to this end I have laid down the principle, that I will not give away peasants as property."*

* Storch's "Russland unter Alexander I." l. iv. p. 362.

Alexander as a monarch felt the sentiment of equality. He tried to be a man amongst men. In 1802 the nobility of one of his governments sent him a deputation, praying him to honour with his presence a *fête* which they desired to give him. Having ascertained that the invitations were exclusively addressed to the nobility, the liberal monarch expressed his dissatisfaction, abstained from appearing at the *fête*, and on the same day gave a grand ball, at which were assembled all the principal inhabitants of the town without distinction of class, and he danced with ladies chosen from both the *bourgeoisie* and the nobles.

In 1803 a Princess Galitzin presumed to appeal to him to protect her husband from the just demands of his creditors, intimating that the Emperor himself was above the law. We quote his answer in his own words: "I do not wish, madam, to place myself above the laws even if I could; for in all the world I do not recognize that authority legitimate which does not flow from the laws. On the contrary, I feel more than anybody the obligation of watching their observance; and even in cases where others may be indulgent, I can be only just."

In 1811 he found a new occasion to proclaim that the law is above the will of the sovereign, and never did he infringe upon his own principle, nor did he ever in conversation disguise his disapprobation of abitrary power. Writing in January, 1813, to his old friend the Prince Adam George Czartoryiski, who was ever most interested for the fate of Poland, he says, "By

degrees, as military events develop themselves, you will see to what an extent the interests of your country are dear to me. As to the manner of doing things, the most liberal are those I have ever preferred." He spoke in the same tone to the representatives of the Polish nation, who gathered around him at the opening of the Diet, the 27th March, 1818.* He said, "The organization which existed in vigorous maturity in your country, permitted the instant establishment of what I have given you, by putting into operation the principles of those *liberal institutions* which have never ceased to be the object of my solicitude, and whose salutary influence *I hope, by the aid of God, to disseminate through all the countries that He has confided to my care.* Thus you have presented me the means of shewing my country what I had long since prepared for her, and what she shall obtain, when the elements of a work so important shall have attained their necessary development."†

The enfranchisement of the serfs of Esthonia, undertaken in 1802 and completed in 1816, and that of the serfs of Courland in 1817, exhibit the same principles. And when in 1819 the deputies of the Livonian nobility submitted to the approbation of the Emperor a plan to pursue the same course with the serfs of their province, the following was his remarkable reply:

* In giving dates we conform to the Gregorian Calendar, which differs from that of Russia.

† See also Alexander's letter to the Prince Raionczek, Viceroy of Poland, bearing date Oct. 19, 1818.

"I am delighted to see that the nobility of Livonia have fulfilled my expectations. You have set an example that ought to be imitated. You have acted in the spirit of our age, and have felt that liberal principles alone can form the basis of the people's happiness."

Such was constantly, during nearly twenty years, the language of Alexander. He deeply mourned the entire absence of all guarantee for the social well-being of his empire. His regret was marked in his reply to Madame de Staël, when she complimented him on the happiness of his people, who, without a constitution, were blessed in such a sovereign, "I am but a lucky accident." A striking truth!

In quoting these several instances of his principles, our object is rather to render justice to the sentiments of the man than to do homage to the sovereign: for we are bound to say, that the idea of applying liberal institutions to a people in the condition of the Russians at that day,—a people not for them, and who neither felt their need nor would have comprehended them if granted,—argued something of inexperience, and would have been a chimerical attempt. Such institutions in Poland, abandoned solely to the nobility, worked no happy results; and in Russia, where all hope of progress reposed solely in the person of the sovereign, they would have been little better than a dead letter. It will then be time to extend general liberty, when the middle class shall have gained in number suffi-

ciently to make itself respected. This is a result to be looked for only from the monarch; assuredly the privileged class will not interfere for its promotion: what Russia needs is not what *we* term public liberty, but is the actual enfranchisement of the masses; it is law and justice for all; it is individual morality; and the extirpation of a frightful social leprosy, unknown amongst ourselves,—the venality of the servants of the state. For all this one remedy alone exists, and that is, the will of the emperor.

Had the energy of Alexander been directed to this end it would have produced more valuable effects than all his protestations about social rights, how just and enlightened soever they were. However, he was animated by honest zeal; and his resolution to examine into everything with his own eyes, held for some years. But he felt himself arrested by innumerable difficulties. He often wanted instruments to carry out his will; and he did not always shew sufficient firmness when excellent ministers should have been protected against the court cabals which were formed to ruin them and defeat his views. The immense distances to be traversed, which, according to Custine, the Emperor Nicholas feels one of the plagues of his empire, presented the same obstacle to Alexander. Again, his desire to exercise European influence distracted his attention from his native work. Questions of alliance, and other matters in which his personal interest was concerned, became the cause of several wars, more or less disastrous, during which the interior of

his empire fell back into its old state and routine. Discouraged, at length, and as he grew older awakening from some of the illusions of his youth, he gave way to indolence more and more, till, at length, his objects became vague and devoid of real utility. He saw himself alone, standing opposed to an immense festering corruption, and, in despair, he ceased to struggle against it: and in the latter portion of his reign grievously neglected the care of his government.

The helm, thus deserted by the pilot, passed into the hands of General Araktchéïef,* a man active, prudent, and devoted to business; perhaps also well intentioned, but a Russian of the old school, without the necessary enlightenment, without political probity, arbitrary, imperious, and inthralled by qualities and notions inimical to advance; governed moreover by unworthy connexions of a particular kind. Under the rule of Araktchéïef the censorship became more severe than ever. Foreign books were admitted with difficulty, and were subject to tyrannical restrictions; many professors of the new University of St. Petersburg were subjected to a despotic and galling inquisition; others were required most rigidly to base their course of instructions upon a programme printed and issued by the supreme authority. Freemasonry was suppressed. Foreign travellers were surrounded with vexatious and troublesome formalities. Many rigorous regulations which had been long disused, and

* See a notice of him in Note (9) of the Appendix.

which were almost forgotten, were revived. In short, the stern and grave Araktchéïef exercised with intolerable severity a power which he derived from a master who carried gentleness to an extreme of weakness,—who loved to discuss the rights of humanity, and whose heart bled for its sufferings.

Strange inconsistency! But inconsistency is the almost inevitable result of want of firmness of character, without which the best intentions are struck with barrenness. We shall find the same contrast in the private life of the monarch, which, in the following chapter, we propose to consider. A similar want of consistency is also to be remarked in his external policy, which, in its turn, will invite our notice. The character of his foreign diplomacy denotes less determination and fixity of purpose than quick intelligence and acuteness,—less love for principles than anxiety to meet exigencies. When the theories of youth had lost their charm it was the expediency of the moment which determined him to the adoption of such or such a course; and later still, it was foreign influence which regulated the decisions of the czar.

The Emperor Paul had implicated Russia in the general affairs of Europe by the part he took in the coalition of 1798. The victories of Suwarrow had given her enormous weight in the European balance. She had been, on one occasion, the guarantee of peace amongst the powers. The Diet of Ratisbon, when menaced by the First Consul of France, saw no resource save in Russian protection. An official paper,

which issued at that time from the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and which circumstances brought to light, says, "In the last days of the old form of government in Germany, we beheld all the princes turning their eyes towards Russia as to a master. Russia did all in her power towards the deliverance of her ally, and for the preservation of the empire and its rights." If the empire was humbled, and its rights were infringed, the author adds, it was not owing to the apathy of Russia, but to that of those who ought to have seconded her, and who did not.

In truth, if Russia, notwithstanding the large demands which her own internal affairs made upon her, was nevertheless determined to interfere in the affairs of her neighbours, she could not have chosen a more noble mission than that of throwing a protecting shield over the independence of Germany. The young monarch felt the chivalrous position which was open to his choice, and the murder of the unfortunate Duke d'Enghien would not have been necessary to induce him to join the third alliance which, in 1804, was formed by England between him, Austria, and Sweden. Alexander was at this time at war with Persia, who had refused to ratify the incorporation of Georgia with his empire; he was menaced by Turkey, who had been stirred up to opposition by France, but these facts did not prevent him from joining the alliance, and the Russian armies soon appeared in Moravia, in Silesia, and on the coasts of the Baltic: even after the decisive day of Austerlitz, when Austria some-

what reluctantly signed the peace, he was in no haste to lay down his arms, but refused his ratification to the treaty which had been concluded at Paris by Mons. d'Oubril, his chargé d'affaires. He was the personal friend of the King of Prussia, and he was enchanted with the Queen Louisa, whose brilliancy of intellect, grace and beauty, had made a most lively impression upon him. The King, the Queen, and the Emperor, when at Potsdam, had made a nocturnal visit together, by torch light, to the vault where the great Frederick reposed. On their knees, and by the side of the tomb, the two sovereigns had joined their hands above it, and sworn eternal amity. But Frederick William, irresolute in character, and very dependant upon his ministers, was not ready to break with a power towards which hitherto he had been all too complaisant. The possession of Hanover was a question on which at length he became embroiled with Napoleon, and a rupture ensued. The presumption of the Prussians, who forgot that they were no longer under their late great monarch, caused their defeat. Notwithstanding the terrible disaster of Jena, the allies of Prussia were faithful to their engagements. Eylau did not shake the resolution of Alexander; but when the bloody battle of Friedland brought an aggravation of misfortune, the courage of the czar failed, and he began to see things in a new light. The conquerors might cross the Niemen, raise Lithuania, and resuscitate Poland, which had lain prostrate for a dozen years. The duties of friendship were disregarded

under such apprehensions: nay, more, the enthusiastic Alexander was smitten with admiration of the great captain who had restored both the throne and the altar in France. His peace of Tilsit was concluded in 1807 (so it has been affirmed in a Russian state paper from which we have already quoted) to save the Prussian monarchy, but doubtless with some less disinterested motives. Perhaps peace was at that time as necessary to Russia as to Prussia: but without positively asserting that it was so, it is difficult to understand, if the salvation of Prussia was its only object, how the surest means of obtaining peace should have been in Alexander's personal aggrandizement. He sacrificed the two champions of the common cause,* and overlooked the interests of his own country. By virtue of that treaty, the King of Prussia was to cede to his northern neighbour the province of Bélostook, in order, as it was pretended, to re-establish the natural limit on this side of Poland. Alexander, who coveted Friedland, engaged to compel the King of Sweden, that gallant and formidable antagonist of Napoleon, not only

* On the 16th of July, the King of Prussia wrote to the King of Sweden a letter, in which he laconically said, with bitter irony, "*My ally* has concluded peace for himself alone." Frederick William III. could do none other than follow his example. But the chivalric Gustavus would not hear of peace. He had formerly returned the Order of the Black Eagle to the King of Prussia, when the King had conferred that order upon Napoleon, and he now returned to St. Petersburg the order of Saint André, which, in time past, had been presented to him by the Emperor Paul. He was said to resemble Paul. But to return to the treaty of Tilsit: it was therein declared that Napoleon restored a part of his dominions to Frederick William, solely out of regard for Alexander.

to lay down his arms, but even to submit to the continental system, of which he himself, in violation of the interests of his empire, had chosen to wear the yoke. This is a grave reproach. Assuredly, Alexander bought the peace of Tilsit at a price much more heavy than would have been paid by a disastrous campaign, an observation we borrow from the lady who originally made it,* and who was, nevertheless, an enthusiastic admirer of her sovereign. In truth, nothing could be more menacing and serious to Russia than a rupture with England. That manufacturing country is the chief market for her produce, which consists of flax, hemp, tallow, grain, and furs, besides other articles, as timber, copper, &c. These raw materials are of great value to England: her industry is expended upon them, and the commerce of Russia is, in a great measure, in the hands of English merchants, who send back in return for these goods their own manufactured articles and bullion. The Russian proprietors, kept continually poor by their habits of pomp and ostentation, are always eager to sell, and cannot at best find sufficient market for their produce; accordingly, the two nations are necessary the one to the other. The commerce established by the ordinance of nature is advantageous to England, but it is indispensable to the Russians, and the czar should have had very weighty reasons to offer for putting a stop to it.

Perhaps, what constrains us to this belief, is our

* Madame la Comtesse de Choiseul-Gouffier née Tisenhans. See the "Historical Memoirs of Alexander," p. 48.

opinion that Alexander, vain by nature, flattered by the advances of Napoleon, and fascinated by his genius, allowed himself to be dazzled and captivated. He accepted the secret conditions of the treaty,* and probably consented to divide the empire of the world with France. A grand project this for a young and ambitious sovereign!

But again, on the other hand, as one of the biographers of Alexander has asserted, perhaps at Tilsit no part was left to him but to consent: perhaps he could not refuse, and could only withdraw himself from a difficult position by the aid of dissimulation. Yet the state of his affairs was far from being desperate; his own dominions were intact, and it is difficult for us to see *how* he was pressed. It was an opinion very generally entertained, that in this treaty the czar saw a means of appropriating to himself Finland, the possession of an old ally, but a province deemed necessary to Russia in order to complete her northern frontier, and to cover her capital, which lay exposed at the extremity of the empire. It was supposed that he had no idea of maintaining any lengthened enmity with England, and that he considered the province to be acquired well worth the price to be paid for it, even though that involved the temporary loss of revenue, both national and individual.

It is difficult to determine what might be the true motives for his conduct; but if he acted on the last

* For these secret conditions we refer the reader to Note (10) at the close of the present volume.

supposition it was not based on a sound policy; for in discouraging the antagonists of Napoleon,—England, Prussia, and Sweden,—in authorizing, even for a moment, his usurpations beyond the line of the Rhine and the Alps, what security could Alexander find for the possibility of re-establishing, at a later date, the broken balance of power? Besides, conduct so scandalous was an open denial the many noble sentiments which he had formerly professed, and the idea which he desired should go abroad in Europe, of his character and his chivalry. M. de Chateaubriand* has pronounced the following judgment upon him: "Sincere as a man, in all that concerned humanity, Alexander was cunning as a Demi-Greek in all that related to politics." From St. Helena was given forth a more severe judgment; "He is a Greek of the Lower Empire." Perhaps both the one and the other are too harsh; and yet the policy which drew them forth very well seems to merit them.

The difficulty of judging Alexander and some of his acts has been felt by very competent persons. We quote the words of an ambassador of France at the court of Russia, whom the emperor, and all who surrounded him highly esteemed; namely, the Vicomte de la Ferronnays, who, on the 19th May, 1823, wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, M. de Chateaubriand, a letter, from which the following is an extract. "It becomes every day more and more difficult to comprehend the character of the emperor.

* "Congrès de Verone," vol. i. p. 186.

I do not believe it possible that any man can talk the language of honesty and sincerity better than himself: a conversation with him always leaves a favourable impression: you quit him persuaded that here is a prince who unites to the finest qualities of the gentleman all those of a great sovereign, of a man of profound experience, gifted with the greatest energy. He reasons wonderfully well; he pushes his argument; he explains himself with eloquence, and with the warmth of one who is earnest and sincere. Well! after all this, experience, the events of his life, what I see every day, warn you not to rely too much upon him. Multiplied instances of acts of weakness prove to you that the energy he throws into his words does not exist in his character. And yet, on the other hand, the same weak character may be seized all at once with a fit of energy and excitement—a paroxysm that may suffice to bring him instantly to determinations the most violent, whose consequences may be incalculable. Besides, he is rather jealous of us: he cannot reconcile himself to the fact that Paris is the capital of Europe, and that St. Petersburg is only a pompous aggregation of structures raised upon a swamp, which no one cares to visit, and from whence its inhabitants are glad to escape to any distance as often as they can. The emperor, in fact, is excessively suspicious,—a proof of weakness, and this failing is a misfortune so much the greater, that this prince is, to the full extent of the word (at least, I believe so), the most honest man I know. He will, perhaps,

often do wrong, but it is ever his desire to do right."

The reader must form his own conclusion from these various testimonies. We resume the thread of events.

When, after the campaign of Wagram in 1809, Finland was conquered as far as Torneo, and the peace of Fredericksham was concluded, the ardour of Alexander abated. He did not hasten to unite his army to that of the French Emperor. At Erfurt he had so highly admired the successful captain, and had entered into so close an intimacy with him, that it needed all the energetic opposition of the Empress-Mother, Marie Foedorovna, to prevent him from granting him one of his sisters in marriage. Yet is it probable, supposing the sentiments of Alexander to have been sincere, that it was this mere interview at Erfurt that changed them and dissipated his illusions? A diplomatist, much esteemed by Napoleon, has publicly affirmed, that, in the conferences which had taken place there, the autocrat insisted that the Ottoman Empire should be divided between them. He claimed Moldavia and Wallachia, which at another time Austria might have disputed with him. Nor was that all. He said to the Duke of Vicenza in 1808, "I must needs have the key that opens the gate of my own house." This key was no other than Constantinople. He had already seized upon one of the keys of the Baltic, and perhaps Napoleon resented it. Be this as it may, it is certain

that, a little later than the time of which we speak, the Russian troops passed the boundaries of the Austrian states. Nevertheless Russia was not forgotten in 1810 in the treaty of Schoenbrunn; she consented once again to enrich herself with the spoil of an old ally, an ally whom, indeed, she had never loved; and she did not disdain to accept portions of Eastern Galicia, which have since been restored to Austria.

If the realization of the plans of Alexander as far as regarded Turkey were delayed, Napoleon pressed his own without cessation. On the one hand, determined to shut England out from the mainland, he pursued his continental system with the greatest rigour, and did not even respect Oldenburg, in consideration of the family ties which bound it to Russia; on the other, he enlarged more and more the Duchy of Warsaw, maintained a strong garrison at Dantzic, and was maturing his plans with regard to the final re-establishment of Poland.

The patience of Alexander was exhausted, and the Russian nobility, who were suffering under the continental system, murmured loudly. The necessity of the case at length determined the sovereign to a sounder and better policy; he could have had no more favourable moment for a rupture than that in which the heroic resistance of the Spaniards held in check the great force of France. The Russian tariff issued on the 31st December, 1810, (12th January, 1811,) which increased the difficulties of French importation, was the prelude to a change of system.

Napoleon saw a second subject of complaint, in the increasing facility with which English vessels were now permitted to enter the Russian ports: at first they were admitted under the transparent pretence of being Portuguese, but soon they were encouraged to drop even that thin mask. Hostilities were declared, and the Russian ambassador, Prince Alexander Kourakin, was compelled to leave Paris. At length on the 24th June, 1812, the French army passed the Niemen.

Through the mediation of Sweden and Great Britain, the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was brought to an end; military operations had been long suspended by the armistice of Kobosá and the congress of Gossi. The treaty of Bucharest of May 28, 1812, bounded the Russian limits by the Pruth and the Danube. The Sultan undertook to conciliate the Shah of Persia, who, at the suggestion of England, then hostile to Russia, had made an incursion into the Caucasus. But the treaty of Gulistan was not signed until October 12, 1813. In the July of 1812, Russia concluded peace with Sweden, England, and Spain.

To the great astonishment of all the world, Russia was ill-prepared for the contest on which she was about to enter. She lost much precious time, owing to an unfortunate determination of Alexander, to command his army in person: that determination he afterwards renounced. He had chosen General Pfuhl as his second in command, a man of distinguished

talents, who had been formerly in the Prussian service, and since, about the person of the czar. It was this foreigner, and not the Minister of War, Barclay de Tolly, who sketched out the plan of the campaign, and put his sovereign on the defensive. The simple idea of defeating the enemy by the immensity of the country, was one which would scarcely have presented itself to a Russian; nevertheless, in the extremity of the peril, the army was loud in its demands for a commander of Russian name.

We will not enter into details: at this time of day they present only subjects of regret to the heart of a Frenchman. Assuredly it was neither the genius of Alexander, nor the shrewdness of Koutosoff which saved Russia; it was the faults Napoleon himself committed, and the intense rigour of the season, which rendered the want of shelter and of food doubly deadly: it was the burning of Moscow, which can neither be the subject of honour nor of reproach to any person; for it was the effect of the rage, at once Goth-like and patriotic, of a populace thrown into despair, and furious at seeing themselves abandoned by the richer classes, who bore with them all their portable property, and only left behind their dwellings, which they could not carry away. Alexander triumphant, and having effectually broken the chains of Europe, was modest in his success. These events, decisive in their character, were the means of bringing him to a policy less contrary to the interests of his country than that which he had of late followed;

these events, moreover, assigned him a part in the great drama, for which he seemed better fitted than for wielding the despotic power of a Russian Czar, namely, that of the benefactor of humanity. He was the spirit of the coalition which defeated the Emperor of the French; his learning, his enthusiasm, his well-chosen language, electrified the world, and even the vanquished nation bore their humiliation more easily when they saw who was their conqueror. There was grace and dignity in the words he addressed to the Parisians. "If I arrive late," he said, "accuse only French valour." These words were not outdone by the saying of a chivalrous prince of the restored house of Bourbon, "Nothing is changed! We have only one Frenchman more." The autocrat inspired the French nation with confidence; they were grateful for his moderation in the moment of victory, for his generosity, for the delicacy of his proceedings: they marvelled to find in the sovereign of a people whom they still designated barbarians all that the most finished education, combined with rare native qualities, can produce.

"Peace, friendship, and the happiness of the French," he exclaimed: "behold my triumph." A triumph to be envied, and of which few princes could have boasted. This was certainly the brightest epoch in his reign. It had not been supposed that his country was destined to stand in so brilliant a position before Europe. In contemplating Russia at that time, one is almost tempted to subscribe to the somewhat vain-

glorious assertion of the author of the memoir cited at an earlier page, "Russia did voluntarily what she effected, for the benefit of all: she preserved the liberty of the world; and knit into integrity and completeness the territories and laws of Germany."

However, this would be to attribute to Russia alone that which was the work of the entire coalition, and especially, and in a great measure of the British nation, which had been so persevering in her antagonism to Napoleon. The motives which had led Britain to break the treaty of Amiens had not been of the most imperious order; they consisted of the annoyance she suffered with respect to commerce, and a strong jealousy of French influence, power, and principles, which pervaded all classes. But whilst we blame this rupture, we must admit that England defended her political and commercial interests with courage, dignity, and firmness. On the part of Russia there was less that was magnanimous in the war: it was when pushed to extremities that she took up arms: the question was involving her existence; it was for the domestic hearth—*pro aris et focis*—that she fought. Hers was a holy war. But she defended other countries as well as herself, when she should have destroyed or driven from her frontiers the hosts which had invaded them: she would make no separate and individual peace; it was her duty to look to the interests of other people—people for the most part bowed under oppression. Acting on this principle, she called upon them to arise; she invited them to

seek their independence; and she even went so far as to shake their fidelity to their own governments. "Fear may still possess your sovereigns," cried Alexander in his proclamation of Warsaw, Feb. 22nd, 1813, "but let not a disastrous obedience restrain you. Equally unfortunate with yourselves, they abhor the power they dread, and they will in the end applaud the generous efforts which shall accomplish your happiness and their liberty. If, yielding to such pusillanimity they, (that is your sovereigns,) persist in this fatal submission, the voices of their subjects must make themselves heard, and the princes who suffer their subjects to live in opprobrium and misery, must be goaded by them to vengeance and to glory."

It was the first time that such language had been held. At this moment of his career, Alexander seemed to feel his course clear, and no hesitation, no indirectness interfered with his actions. He saw his end, and determined to reach it at any price. In order to avoid jealousies and rivalries, he determined to consign to another the supreme command which he had coveted for himself; but he was ever found in the foremost ranks. At Dresden, at Leipsic, every where it was so. When Schwarzenberg hesitated to march upon Paris, Alexander himself undertook to convince him that the measure was possible, and his opinion prevailed. He had no interest in reducing the French to a political nullity, for the power of Austria and that of the nation who governed the seas and possessed the Indies, must

not be allowed to remain without a counterpoise. Alexander is to be thanked that France after that mortal struggle was not more deeply and entirely prostrated; that she did not cease to be a respectable power. His expansive and cultivated reason and intellect carried great weight in the councils of the allies, and often imposed silence upon paltry fears and trifling objections. The Jacobins who terrified other nations, did not arouse his fears. Arrived in Paris, he made choice of men of all parties to counsel and inform him, and received with favour and gratitude his old friend, General Laharpe. He preferred Pozzo di Borgo to be his ambassador at the court of the Tuilleries, a step which caused some jealousy.

After having done so much for the repose of the world, what did Alexander accomplish for the happiness of his people? It was just that his country—that country of which he wore the crown—should enjoy her share also of the benefit attending his philanthropic efforts. Poland was erected into a new kingdom in his favour; but her re-establishment was rather an embarrassment and a means of weakness to his native empire than an advantage. The Russians were entirely devoid of those liberties which the privileged class of Poland enjoyed under the shelter and protection of the czar. Jealousy was the natural and necessary result. The conquerors, the true and native children of the autocrat, saw themselves less favoured than the conquered nation. In truth, as we have before observed, the absence of political liberty

was no real misfortune to the masses in Russia. In the then state of things, one class only would have monopolized them. It was rather the general state of things which itself called for reform. The aristocracy was little eager to second the sovereign in granting rights and liberties to those below themselves. Autocracy is more favourable to the simultaneous development of all classes, than a constitutional regime would be, in which the power should be mainly engrossed by the nobility. Guarantees were necessary for all; the aristocracy of Russia was little disposed to aid Alexander in his wish to emancipate the serfs, and to create a class of free cultivators of the soil. But the aristocracy had its own claims; it desired an upright and paternal administration, justice which should be freely and equally administered to all, and which should know no respect of persons.

The re-establishment of peace and the return of the czar to his dominions seemed to promise to the Russians the gratification of their hopes. The general expectation was deceived. The monarch's person was indeed at home, but his attention and his thoughts were fixed upon Europe. The conclusion of the Holy Alliance, Sept. 26, 1815, deeply interested him, and absorbed his whole soul.

We of the present day feel that the public opinion of the time erred in violently condemning that act. It was indeed extraordinary; but it was the fruit of noble sentiments, and was founded on an elevated and

generous conception. That magnificent declaration, however edifying in its spiritual sense, was little adapted to real life; it remained sterile; the European coalition might have been effected without such a programme, and to it has been attributed that which did not in truth spring from it, the hostility that subsequently arose against reforms which the necessities and the intelligence of the times demanded. Nothing could be more inoffensive than this diplomatic homily; but the smile which played on the lips of Louis XVIII., when, at a later date, he affixed his signature to it, excites no wonder. As to its effects, as to the realization of that system of universal peace and fraternity which it advocated, it is very certain that the systematically pacific reign of Louis Philippe has, in this respect, better served the interests of humanity, than this august profession issuing from three sovereigns, professing a different form of Christianity, each of which has at times been marked by intolerance.

We owe to Alexander's tutor, Cæsar Laharpe, an ingenious apology for the Holy Alliance, which we shall give as a curious document, though that act itself stands little in need of justification. He writes, "Although intrepid in the midst of danger, Alexander had a horror of war. Thoroughly aware of the abuses that excite the discontent of nations, he hoped that during a lengthened peace, the want of which was generally felt, the governments of Europe, recognizing the importance of undertaking such reforms as the

necessities of the age called for, would seriously apply themselves to that work. To this end a state of profound tranquillity was indispensable; and as the confusion of the past thirty years appeared to have greatly weakened the old ideas of order and subordination, he thought he should be able to remedy that, by making a solemn appeal to religion. So far at least as this monarch is concerned, no doubt such an appeal was an emanation proceeding from his own noble heart; but the genius of evil soon took possession of these philanthropic conceptions, and turned them against himself. The assemblage in the "*Plaine des Vertus*" (10 September, 1814) of a Russian army of 160,000 men ready for the field, struck with amazement the diplomatic corps of Europe, who were present at the imposing spectacle; but such an exhibition of the military strength of a vast empire alarmed them much less than the invisible power and perfect moral influence which the greatness of soul and well-known principles of the monarch who now reviewed his troops had created. At this period, indeed, from north to south, from east to west, the eyes of the oppressed were turned towards Alexander I.; but from this moment also is to be dated the conspiracy which secretly plotted to strip him of that formidable moral power, which gave him for auxiliaries every friend of enlightenment and humanity,—the universal co-operation of honest men. Disposed by the native moderation of his character to consent to anything which might remove fears of his preponderating influence, and willing at any price to dissipate

the alarm that was feigned or felt, he consented to the establishment of a court of Areopagus, where a majority of votes should decide the measures to be taken in common for the maintenance of the general tranquillity. The genius of evil quickly caught a glimpse of the advantage he might reap from so generous an abrogation of this preponderating influence. Thanks to the troublesome and vexatious turn the members managed to give to the progress of ordinary affairs, the confidence of the nations was impaired, and the magnanimous monarch who had so well deserved it saw it lost, amid the impious acclamations of the enemies to his glory, who did not hesitate to impute to his obstinate and absolute will, measures the most unpopular which they dictated in their Areopagus."*

This explication does honour to the man who had sown much excellent seed in the mind of his imperial pupil; it is, however, something forced. A more simple one, we conceive, would be to regard the Holy Alliance as the fruit of that enthusiasm which great events had produced in the mind of Alexander, who had been one of the principal actors in them, and who was impressible, sentimental, and naturally disposed to mysticism. He had exhausted all other emotions; religion only remained to him. In his early days the eloquent Platon, a bishop of his church, had been his instructor in religion; in later years, Madame Krudener

* This letter was addressed to the "Globe," on the 25th July, 1829, in reply to an article on Alexander of Russia by Impeytany. Geneva, 1828.

had more deeply impressed him with its sentiments. Religion produced in his heart salutary warmth, and imparted to his nerves a wholesome tension. In religion, the man advanced in life, and having exhausted other emotions, can alone find true and deep resources and happiness. It has been said, "When the organs wear out and sensual enjoyments fail, it must necessarily happen that, deprived of intellectual activity sufficient to replace what they have lost, certain souls should seek in the unlimited sphere of the religious affections, something to supply the want of which they are conscious." Another author has declared, in speaking of Alexander, that "a cruel accident in his life weighed upon him, as with the gnawing power of remorse."* It is true that the violent death of Paul, of which he was altogether innocent, left a terrible poniard within him. Touched with melancholy, arising from many causes, he was anxious to make his peace with God; the sense of the necessity for doing so, strongly seized his spirit; it sometimes, perhaps, paralyzed his will and enfeebled his powers of action.

On one point Cæsar Laharpe has, doubtless, spoken truly. The Holy Alliance implicated the Russian Emperor in a cause which until then had been none of his; it involved him in that stationary spirit of which Austria was then the living, systematic representative. "Kings ought to be permitted to form public alliances,

* Capefigue, "Histoire de la Restauration," t. ii. p. 300.

to defend themselves against secret societies." Such, says M. de Chateaubriand, was the explanation of this treaty which he himself gave, when the Emperor of France had succeeded in infusing into his soul some of the narrowness which cramped his own; when, shewing him the danger of those liberal professions which with a native simplicity he made, he succeeded in communicating his own fears respecting the various features, and the general spirit of progress. M. de Metternich, the diplomatist of the old system, that is to say, the supple, tortuous, dark, diplomatist, succeeded in shaking the noble generosity of Alexander. He went to work cleverly. Now he caressed him, and anon he excited his fears, and in the end acquired over him as great an ascendancy as Napoleon himself had formerly possessed. Alexander, constantly beset, ended by adopting the dark stagnant policy of Austria, and at last knew no other will than that of the chancellors of the court, and of state.*

Governed by others, and by the suggestions and representations they made to him, the autocrat allowed himself to be by degrees allured from those sound and liberal principles which were essentially his own. Absorbed by affairs foreign to the interests of

* A French statesman of the time, the Vicomte de la Ferronays, writes, "I know by experience the adroitness of M. de Metternich. I have seen him more than once cause to be adopted here (at St. Petersburg) measures the utility of which was at least doubtful. He has made the emperor believe so many things for some years past, that he does not despair even of persuading him," &c. "Congrès de Vèrone," first edition.

his empire, constantly engaged in journeying from one extremity of Europe to another, he was kept in perpetual motion, and perpetual agitation, and did nothing with consistency or perseverance. Nothing about him appeared durable. Scarcely returned from the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, he went to Warsaw, where disturbances had broken out; from thence, after the events of Piedmont and of Naples, he repaired in 1820 to the Congress of Troppau; then in January of 1821 to Leybach, where he had no sooner sanctioned the new principle of armed intervention than he received the tidings of the insurrection of the Greeks, who, driven to despair by their tyrants, had at length taken the noble resolution to conquer or to die for the holy cause of their outraged religion and national independence. Prince Metternich was resolved to re-establish the rule of the Sultan over this oppressed people. During four years he paralyzed and rendered of no avail all their laudable aspirations and efforts; this he did without regard to the delicate position of Russia, or to her interests.

In vain the Greeks invoked the humanity of their powerful neighbour, their co-religionist, their old ally, nay more, perhaps their accomplice,—in vain the wishes of all Europe were fixed on his intervention in their favour; at St. Petersburg the cries of distress of the Eastern church were unheeded. The sight of one of the bishops of the national religion hung at the porch of his church was not enough to gain attention. The

insults directed to the Russian ambassador, a personal friend of the monarch, had no more effect, and when Baron Strogonoff, with the irritation of wounded dignity demanded his passports, he was coolly received at home, and he found himself condemned to swallow his unredressed grievances.

Addressing M. de Chateaubriand, Alexander said, "I thought during the civil wars of the Peloponnesus signs of revolution were observable: from that time I held back;" but when the question concerned an invasion of Spain, undertaken to restore to the throne the absolute Ferdinand, a prince little qualified to obtain the respect of a people, he did not abstain from interference. He was the soul of the deliberations of the Congress of Verona in 1822, and was all but inclined to use constraint to his ally France to compel her, in spite of the opposition of England, to charge herself with the execution of the violent measures determined in common.

Such were the fruits of the strict friendship between the three sovereigns of the North. The imagination of Alexander was continually employed in creating phantoms which he seriously opposed; and whilst he was so engaged, he lost sight of realities and of the affairs of his country, which loudly called for his attention.

Such was the character of a reign which in its opening had promised to regenerate Russia. All is explained by the personal character of the sovereign, "Which offered only a radiant superficies,—of softened

lustre it is true, but where weakness was more conspicuous than strength, and over which borrowed ideas successively glided, and systems with no necessary connexion between them." So has pronounced one who had studied the man.*

* Alph. Rabbe, "Histoire d'Alexandre I.," t. i. p. 4.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAST YEAR OF ALEXANDER'S REIGN; HIS DEATH AT TAGANROG.

THE picture we have briefly sketched of the reign of Alexander, and of its principal effects upon continental affairs and those of his own empire, will, we trust, place the reader in a position to judge of the state of things in his colossal dominions. We are now to enter into details, both with respect to facts and also to the actors upon the scene.

The private life of sovereigns belongs to history as much as their political acts. We have often in the former the key to the real causes of the latter. The individual life of a sovereign also reflects its shadow for good or for evil on his generation; sometimes it exhibits a contrast between the manners of a reigning family and a people ruled, interesting to observe, because this also will have durable effects.

We may well conceive that it was not without inward pain and self-reproach that the benevolent Alexander remained deaf to the cry of humanity, whilst he stifled in his heart the voice that rose in favour of the Greeks, and resisted the wishes of his people, who were animated by a lively sympathy for their co-religionists. That sympathy was manifested as strongly

as it could be under this despotic government, where every external demonstration is interdicted, unless when specially commanded or permitted by authority. They could not see without surprise the head of the so-styled *orthodox* church enduring the outrages of the infidels, and standing by an unmoved spectator whilst one of her chief pastors and many of her children were massacred. These Greeks had of late been regarded as under the protection of Russia, and that power had more than once instigated them to break their chains. The supineness of the Emperor under such circumstances mortified the nobility, shocked the clergy, and was a subject of sincere affliction to the people, to whom, in their debased condition, religious sentiments held the place of political emotions.

But foreign councils prevailed. The will of the czar was that all should be quiet. It was necessary for his people to submit and restrict themselves to prayers to heaven for those unhappy victims of pusillanimity. High and low obeyed; murmurs were suppressed; but the Russians failed not to attribute to the wrath of God the misfortunes which befel Alexander, amongst which was the malady with which he was afflicted in 1824, at the time of the marriage of his young brother the Grand-Duke Michael with Helen Paulovna, sometime Charlotte, Princess of Wirtemburg. His indisposition commenced with erysipelas in the leg, but the disease soon spread into the blood; it affected the whole body, was accompanied with fever, and fixed itself in the brain, producing delirium. For

a time his life was in danger, and the people, who sincerely loved him, believed that they saw in this a punishment from on High, because he had abandoned an orthodox nation.

Another misfortune was a frightful calamity which befel St. Petersburg in 1824.

The striking beauty of that city is not so much owing to the splendour of the palaces, the majesty of the temples, the regularity and nobleness of the magnificent streets, flanked with *trottoirs* and often planted with trees, as it is to the superb river on which it is built, and which forms the very essence of its being, as it was the cause of its foundation. It did not suffice to Peter the Great to have a sea-port on the European side, it was his further will that that port should be in communication with the interior of his empire, and that it should easily become the receptacle of her products. The Neva, with but little artificial aid, offered such communication. By means of some hydraulic works it has been united with other waters, which again are connected with the Volga, and thus a great artery is formed, traversing the country three-fourths of its length, and connecting together the Baltic and the Caspian. These works, commenced by Peter the Great, were extended and perfected after his time, and now that immense line of navigation is open during the four months of Russian summer, covered with barks conveying to the metropolis goods and produce of every kind. At its *embouchure*, in the Gulf of Finland, the Neva, which is nothing else than a

prolongation of the Lake Ladoga, forms an archipelago, and amongst the last isles of the group are those of Cronstadt, lying in the gulf itself. There are the military fort and post, and there not only ships of war, but merchant vessels, of too great draught of water to get up the river, are compelled to anchor. On another marshy isle of the archipelago, situated six leagues higher up, is built a large portion of the modern capital of Russia. The *coup d'œil* is grand, but reposing on a soil without solidity, and where building-stone is not to be had, brick and plaster, little suited to stand the severity of the climate, are found replacing granite in a large portion of the buildings. Bordered by magnificent quays formed of that primitive rock, which has been transported thither at vast cost, the river majestically winds through the city, and its branches directed to right and left, water all the quarters of it.

On one side lies a cluster of isles, most of which are covered with charming villas; on another side are wide open spaces, around which are grouped in magnificent array the admiralty, the winter palace, the Cathedral of St. Isaac, and the senate house. In the centre of one of these large squares is the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, fixed upon a rock which is one huge solid block. In another of these rises the column of Alexander, hewn from a mass of Finland granite, but less prodigious in dimensions. On the left of the river are the Moika and the Fontanka, artificial canals, which serve to drain the land, and for the transport of wares, and

which, after having described concentric semicircles, rejoin the body of the river; they also are flanked with granite quays, and lined with splendid houses, which add to the general effect.

The river itself is past description: opening a vast panorama, it rolls its abundant waters at the feet of the most splendid edifices. In front of the beautiful and elegant summer gardens, across the water, stands the sombre, silent fortress, with its cathedral, ornamented with a clock of Dutch manufacture, from which rises a gilded needle. Farther on is the exchange, flanked by rostral columns; the academies of sciences and of arts; and on the opposite bank are seen the Imperial quay, one *façade* of the winter palace and the magnificent line of buildings of the English quay, chiefly devoted to the merchant princes of foreign nations, who have established their general quarters there.

So much and more does the Imperial city owe to the Neva. But if the river makes its principal ornament, it is also its irreconcileable enemy. Its *embouchure* towards the west is exposed to the storms which, in the Gulf of Finland, so often accompany the autumnal equinox. These storms suddenly drive the waters of the gulf into the bed of the river, which overflowing, swells, roars, casts forth its accumulated floods upon the quays, and invades the low quarters on both its banks. It may be conceived how terrible is the destruction which the unchained waves make, in a city built upon a drained marsh, on the eve of a northern winter, enduring seven months of the year.

It is said that Peter the Great was warned of the danger to be apprehended, but that he would nevertheless persist in his enterprise. The following incident is related on this subject. He had already laid a part of the foundation of his new city in the marshes of Ingria, when he accidentally perceived a tree marked around the trunk. He approached a Finnish peasant, and asked him what that mark was intended to indicate? "It is the height to which the inundation arose in the year 1680," said the czar, man, with *naïve* simplicity. "You lie," cried the in wrath; "what you have uttered is impossible," and with his own hand he cut down the warning tree.

But, alas! the wrath, or the incredulity, of the monarch changed not the habits of the waters. During the life of Peter, the river seemed, indeed, to respect his new creation; but scarcely was the founder of St. Petersburg laid in the tomb, when the inundations succeeded one another thickly. There were terrific ones in 1728, 1729, 1735, 1740, 1742, and above all in 1777, a few days before the birth of Alexander. In the last instance, the waters of the Neva rose ten feet higher than their ordinary level.*

A catastrophe of the same kind, but still more fearful, was to sadden the close of the life of that good and benevolent sovereign.

On the 19th of November, 1824, one of those

* One of the unhappy victims of this frightful disaster was the Princess Tarakanoff, daughter of the Empress Elizabeth and of the Count Alexis Rasoumoffski, who had been for ten years confined in the fortress after having been seduced from Rome by Alexis Orloff.

ravages of which we have already spoken, blowing from the west and south-west with extreme violence, forced back the waters of the Neva, and drove those of the gulf into it. The river rose four measures above its ordinary level, and almost the entire city was submerged. The water flooded the streets, and rushed into the houses, where it mounted almost to the first story. Horses and carriages were whirled around by its fury on its surface, then sank to rise no more; bridges were torn up, and small wooden houses were washed away, and carried off as prey by the raging tide. The environs were literally razed. At Cronstadt, a ship of the line was borne into the great market-place, where it rested; nothing could resist the shock. From eight o'clock in the morning the alarm guns were fired, and until four in the afternoon the water continued to rise. The emperor had recently returned from a long journey, in which he had penetrated as far as to the steppes of the Kirghians: now he found himself besieged as it were in his own palace, by an unworsted enemy. He took his station upon the balcony which looks up the Neva to the north, and there, surrounded by his weeping family, he had the grief of seeing the river rushing upwards towards its source, bearing upon its bosom wrecks of every kind, and many small wooden houses, some of them still tenanted by their inhabitants, who were uttering cries for succour which none could render. Bridges and merchandise were floating away; horses and other domestic animals struggling in the torrent;

barks sinking under the crowds of human victims who sought refuge in them; and some, who had escaped death by drowning, were actually dying of wet and cold, and lay stiffening on the decks of floating vessels, or on loose rafts of wood.

The monarch, in despair, stretched his hands and arms towards heaven, and invoked divine mercy; he then threw himself at once into the scene to save whom he might.

He speedily gathered around him a few resolute men, sent some of them with assistance in all directions, and, with others, got into a bark, visited the spots where the suffering was most appalling, and did not hesitate to expose his life to a thousand dangers, in order to rescue all whom he could reach and to whom he could afford aid. His presence revived the sinking courage of many; he stimulated the efforts of some; addressed words of consolation and sympathy to others, words which issued from the depths of his soul; he ministered to the most pressing need which fell under his eye, and promised future help. Nor were his promises idle: he immediately imposed upon himself pecuniary sacrifices, that he might augment his power to bestow; and to the honour of the Russians of every class be it told, his example was nobly imitated. Many a poor sufferer was by these means in some measure consoled and re-imbursed. The official report rated the number of lives lost at 450; and it is probable that the truth would hardly be reached, if this number were doubled or trebled. Infirm and sick

persons were suddenly surprised, and could not escape; and children, innocently sleeping in their cradles, were carried off by an easy death to wake in a better world. In the galley-quay and the manufactories alone, 500 workmen fell victims. Winter provisions were destroyed and swept away, and the value of many millions' sterling in sugar, cotton, wool, salt, &c., was at once annihilated.* Many houses that were not carried away, were rendered uninhabitable; and thousands of poor houseless wretches, without means to warm their chilled members, or dry their saturated clothes, (for the flood was followed by cold which sent Reaumur's thermometer down to the 10th degree,) were seen wandering through the streets, which were scattered over with wrecks. Houses of the most solid construction remained impregnated with saline damp, and hung with crystallizations, which proved that it was not the river, but the sea which had thus awfully invaded them. The foundations of many were shaken; and if the water had continued for any length of time at the height it had reached, even these must have fallen.

To add the crowning point to the distress, all who suffered under it could not but look forward with dread to future returns of the same disaster. There existed, and there still exists, this continual danger hovering, like a destroying angel, over a population whose thoughts are, nevertheless, perpetually diverted

* The subscriptions amounted to more than 4,000,000 francs. The Emperor gave 1,000,000, and the Imperial family gave 234,000 roubles. The Count Orloff, the Prince Kourakin, and the Count Strogonoff, gave each 100,000 roubles, and the merchants were also munificent.

from it, engrossed by the glitter of riches and honours, and who, while death stands thus ever by their side, give themselves up to a life of dissipation, a life essentially material.*

The multitude regarded the catastrophe as a judgment of God. The czar, permanently affected by the sad spectacles he had witnessed, never recovered from the shock; this increased his disgust of life and aggravated the heavy melancholy that had of late been growing upon him,† and which had taken its rise in the dispersion of the bright illusions of his youth, and in the mass of cares constantly pressing upon him.

We must now say a few words on the political cares which distracted Alexander at this time. The whole of Europe was in a state of agitation. The fate of Greece, the object of universal sympathy, roused the nations against their kings. A new era had commenced: the necessity of guarantees for the public safety struck the minds of all men; and the theory of "right divine" was doomed to be annihilated amongst the old nations

* Again, in 1825, during the abode of the author at St. Petersburg, this danger was imminent. On the 6th November, the deep rolling of the cannon of the admiralty gave its terrific warning to the inhabitants. All was consternation and preparation for escape. The wind from the south-west, as in former disasters, drove the waters of the gulf into the river, which for many hours continued to rise, whilst the sad, heavy sound of the cannon unceasingly repeated the alarm. Happily alarm was the only evil experienced on this occasion; for the wind subsided and the waters returned to their course before the banks had been overflowed. In three days all was forgotten.

† See in the Appendix at the end of this volume, Note (12,) some details upon the character and manner of life of Alexander; they are derived from the testimony of one who had been much about that monarch in the latter years of his life.

of Europe. In the first pressure of alarm and need, caused by the encroachments of one formidable revolutionary power, the monarchs had recognised the rights of their subjects, and had made promises to them which were but too soon forgotten, after the danger had passed; but the people retained their recollection of these pledges; they would no longer remain quiescent under the old order of things; order was maintained by force alone, and, in consequence, all parties were ill at ease. Secret societies were formed in almost every country of Europe, and in some of them democracy had its full swing, and demagogues rose to the head of affairs. Young minds were carried away,—youth is always excited by generous impulses,—the old regime was undermined, and thrones tottered. Revolution broke out in Naples, in Piedmont, in Spain, and in Portugal. Kings pledged to each other their faith, to resist this revolt against what they termed their rights, to contest in concert the demonstrations which were made on every side, and reciprocally to guarantee their respective positions. Such was the sentiment of the Holy Alliance; it was every where the subject of execration. Alexander had been the originator of that compact; and though he had not foreseen the use which Austria would make of it, and of him especially, yet he would not desert a cause of which he had made himself the origin. Hence his continual movements, his unceasing agitation, his intervention in cases wherein ordinary policy would not have counselled interference.

Whilst external affairs thus occupied him, he was not free from fear in the midst of his own dominions. Poland inspired him with deep alarm, and his native country, notwithstanding her habits of immobility, seemed ready for convulsions.

The professions of liberal sentiments, which Alexander uttered on behalf of Poland, had been received with eager satisfaction, but they remained without their effects. It was easy to foresee that this would be the case. Two countries united under one sceptre could not, in the nature of things, be governed on principles radically different. The Diet of Warsaw became so turbulent that, in 1820, it was necessary to suspend it; and though, in 1824, Alexander opened a new Diet, the Poles considered it a mere mockery of representative forms.* In the mean time, secret societies which menaced the Russian power had been discovered. The principal members of them were arrested in 1823,† and order seemed for the time re-established. It was, however, merely seeming, a calm on the surface only; the political dictatorship and the military regulations repressed all external demonstrations, but a continual agitation below the surface announced that a volcano

* After the decree given from Czarskoselo in February 1825, it was, in fact, nothing more.

† Lukasinski, Dobrogoyski, Machnicki, and others. Notwithstanding these arrests, the patriotic society was not dissolved; its activity continued, and it had in its council superior people, as the Count Stanislaus Soltyka, the Prince Tablonowski, and Lieutenant-Colonel Krzyanowski. The Russian Commission of Inquiry appointed to search into the affair, could only charge the society with having for its object, "To unite all Poles by the tie of nationality."

was ready to burst, and the irruption could only be warded off by means, the very idea of which troubled the repose of a monarch so full of benevolence and so opposed to tyranny as Alexander.

To add to these troubles, Russia herself was by no means tranquil. In the year 1824, insurrections among the peasants occurred in several governments, and especially in that of Novogorod, where the malcontents had the boldness to stop the carriage of the Empress-mother, Marie Foedorovna, in order to present a petition in which they demanded relief from the heavy burdens under which they declared themselves weighed down. Their firm, but respectful bearing, aided by the despair which was painted upon their countenances, won the ear of the empress. She replied in a speech full of indulgence, inviting them to address themselves to the emperor, who would pass through their district a few days later, as he was about to follow her. On the approach of their sovereign, these poor peasants, humble by habit and nature, but having learned firmness and courage under the sharp sense of their necessities, threw themselves on their knees across the road which he must pass, and thus barring his passage, compelled him to listen to their complaints. Their audacity displeased the czar, who drily replied, that he would reflect upon the statements which had been placed before him, and returned to the people the petition which had been handed to him. Surprised and disconcerted by this cold reception on the part of a sovereign whom they adored, and who,

they had believed, would do them justice as soon as he should be made acquainted with their grievances, the people now listened only to the voice of passion; the discontent increased, and it became necessary to employ force to suppress it. Troops were sent to Novogorod secretly, and the public journals were not allowed to inform the public of the fact. The military colonies, however, were not ignorant of these events. It may be desirable to introduce here a brief sketch of the origin and object of these colonies.

The Count Araktchéïeff had given the first idea of them to the emperor, after the drain upon the resources of the empire, caused by the French invasion and its consequences, in order to provide an honourable asylum for the old age of the soldier, without burdening the state. The first application of the plan was made in 1819, in the government of Novogorod. Besides the particular object which we have indicated, the institution had others of a political character. The Russian government, looking forward to the emancipation of the serfs, hoped to restrain the effervescence of a suddenly acquired and blind liberty, by the check of military discipline. But the hopes which had been built upon the military colonies were not realized. General Araktchéïeff confessed himself so completely disappointed in the results of his own project, that he desired to abandon it. The colonies were disapproved by the military authorities, and they were odious to the agricultural classes, who, pacific in their tendencies, and attached to their old routine, only submitted

to this new system from the instinctive fear which strong government ever inspires. The colonies themselves shared the general discontent, and threatened to become a fearful focus for fermenting rebellion, as indeed proved to be the case in the year 1832, when they became the theatre of a terrible catastrophe.

There existed in Russia other centres of discontent, which might have been long before known to Alexander, but for his culpable habit of allowing petitions to collect in heaps in his cabinet, without even breaking their seals. He, however, learned the fact on his last journey into Poland,* or immediately after his return. Then he received the first revelation on the subject of the conspiracy which had been for many years plotting against himself and against the existing order of things in Russia—a conspiracy which involved the perpetration of regicide. It is curious and worthy of remark, that, in a country where the police is so active, such a plot should have remained for years undetected. When, at a later portion of our work, we shall enter upon the history of the great state trials, we shall have to refer to an illustrative note written by an old member of the "Union for the Public Good."†

* He was at Warsaw during the third Diet, which was opened May 13, and closed June 13, 1825.

† "Rapport de la Commission d'Enquête," p. 25, note 1re. The first revelation, of which we have spoken above, was made to the Emperor Alexander by an inferior officer of the third regiment of Lancers of Bonj. His name was Sherwood, and he was of English origin. He received, by way of recompense, the honour of hereditary nobility, with the surname of "Veruii," the faithful. It may be easily conceived that this young officer was not long allowed to enjoy the price

The days of the monarch were numbered; the dagger was raised over him; the several parts in the act were assigned and accepted; and the moment for the blow was determined. All this Alexander now knew, and it overpowered him with grief. Tyranny, as we have said, was abhorrent to him, and the good man was unskilled in contending with the wicked, and foiling them with their own weapons. Rather than resort to violence, or drag on under the protection of the bayonet an existence rendered wretched by fear and distrust, he resigned himself to his fate as a victim.

These details, were nothing more to be added, would be enough to account for the melancholy which haunted him in the later years of his reign, and which was painfully manifest in his countenance. But he had to undergo other sufferings.

We must remove the veil which ordinarily covers the secrets of domestic life, and expose a sorrow to which we have referred, and with which the unhappy

of his information, though he had but discharged an imperative duty in rendering it. He closed his life in the year 1828, at the opening of the first Turkish campaign. His revelation amounted, according to the "Report," p. 5, to this—that in some regiments of the first and second army, individuals existed who plotted the overthrow of the social order, and who belonged to a secret society which was daily augmenting its numbers. Knowing one of these, Sherwood solicited permission to repair to Koursk, in order to converse with him and with some other persons whom he believed to be his accomplices, that he might draw from them more circumstantial information. He went thither, and in the month of September he communicated to the government further details which he had obtained. It was probably in consequence of his information that the Colonel Schveikofski was deprived of his regiment.

monarch was afflicted almost at the same period. We shall be compelled to take some steps backward, and to cast our glance over the domestic life of the czar from the period of his marriage with the worthy and pious Elizabeth, whose name will frequently appear in the remaining portion of our recital concerning him; for in his latest hours she was, in fact, what she always would have been if permitted, his good and consoling angel.

Germany is now proud of her domestic virtues, but in the last century that country trafficked in family affections, and with the blood of her children. She sold her princesses to the grand Dukes of Russia. It is well known how the young princess Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst, afterwards Catherine II., was carried by her mother to St. Petersburg,* and from thence to Moscow, where the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna had just arrived, and at length was wedded to the young Grand Duke Peter Foedorovitch, in spite of the aversion which she had at their first interview conceived for him.

She herself, when at a later period of her life she wished to contract a marriage for her son Paul, invited to her court the three princesses of Darmstadt, amongst whom she had resolved to choose

* Peter the Great sent his son, the unhappy czarovitch, into Germany to contract a marriage, and he was united to the Princess of Wolfenbuttel, in the town of Torgau in 1711. The marriage was most unhappy. The lady died at the age of twenty-one, having declared that she was glad to bid adieu to life. See the "Memoirs of Weber upon Russia" in German, t. i. p. 121.

her future daughter-in-law. She acted in the same manner when she again sought a wife for the eldest of her grandsons; then she fixed her views on the princesses of Baden, grand-daughters of the wise Charles Frederick, who was first Margrave, then Elector, and finally Grand-Duke of a country the extent of which during his seventy-three years' reign he augmented tenfold. The father of the three princesses was the prince hereditary Charles Louis.* They were all three destined to a brilliant lot. One became Empress of Russia; another Queen of Sweden; and the third Queen of Bavaria. In 1793 their mother, in accordance with the invitation of Catherine, confided the eldest two to the care of the Countess Chouvaloff, who was to conduct them to St. Petersburg, as she herself had been taken there by her mother.†

Louise-Marie-Auguste obtained the preference. Born in 1779, she was then scarcely fifteen years of age; while Alexander, her destined spouse, was not more than sixteen. The young princess was required to change

* This prince never reigned; he died on a journey into Sweden, in consequence of an accident which befel his carriage at Arboga, December 15, 1801. His son, Charles-Louis-Frederick, succeeded in 1811 the Grand-Duke Charles Frederick, and reigned until 1818.

† She was one of the three princesses of Darmstadt, of whom we have spoken. When the question of the marriage of the Grand-Duke Constantine arose, a German princess was again found quite ready to try her fortune. This time it was the Princess of Saxe-Coburg, who carried to the Russian capital her three daughters. Such was the attraction of an imperial crown, that it overbalanced love of country, attachment to religious faith, and the apprehension which the state of things in Russia might then well cause.

the form of her religion; and in the ceremony of renunciation she received the holy chrism, and at the same time the name of Elizabeth Alexcïovna, which she afterwards caused to be universally revered.

The union of this really lovely pair was celebrated the 9th of October, 1793. It seemed impossible that happiness should fail to crown it, for to all appearance the match was better assorted than is usually the case in the highest conditions of life. The grand-duchess was elegant in form, and beautiful in countenance, her manners were perfect, and she had spirit, talents, wit, and tastes well suited to her condition; her disposition was gentle and amiable; and her character full of sweetness and devotion. She possessed the secret of making herself beloved; and enjoyed the esteem and good opinion of all who knew her. She was charitable without ostentation, her tastes and pleasures were simple; she loved retirement, which she rendered graceful by the culture of the arts and the practice of every virtue. What failed then to make her the delight of a prince so distinguished as Alexander? She wanted a little of that nobility of spirit and temperament which characterized himself; a little of that brilliant frivolity which in Russia is so highly prized. Catherine, also, had misjudged, and wrought injury to the young couple by an excess of maternal affection. The grand-duke was too young when he married; the empress was anxious still to carry on with him her system of education, and it has been said that she

did not respect so rigidly as she ought to have done the liberties of the married pair. Moreover, two daughters, born in the first years of their union, died early, thus breaking the tie formed by offspring, which is often more sure and more durable than the effervescence of the affections. Alexander was of an inconstant temperament; but his passions were warm, and his heart was steady, and disposed to love; after some passing weaknesses he contracted an attachment which lasted for eleven years. The necessity of secrecy lent an additional charm to this amour, to which three children owed a brief and fragile existence. Elizabeth, deeply wounded that she should have a rival in her husband's love, a rival, too, who was infinitely her inferior, excepting in the one point of beauty, listened too much, perhaps, to the suggestions of her pride; she avoided occasions of meeting him, gave herself up to grief, and sought consolation only in the practice of unceasing benevolence.

Of virtue so austere that no whisper has ever been raised against it, and constant in her sentiments, she did not cease to love her husband. She stifled her complaints; and wore an air of external calm, but was often surprised in tears, contemplating the picture of the amiable but faithless Alexander.

When the events which followed 1812 obliged him to quit his dominions, where during the preceding crisis she had behaved with magnanimity and courage worthy of an empress, she was unwilling that the vast distance of 700 leagues should separate her from her

husband, and should cause her to hear only after a long lapse of time of the emperor's proceedings: accordingly she repaired to her native country, where she would at once be in his vicinity, and be revivified by the recollections of her early youth. During a sojourn of some months at Baden, her grace, simplicity, and benevolence, together with the cheerfulness of her mind, and the excellence of her sentiments, won all hearts. She might have found again the happiness which she had lost, in taking up her abode there, where her brother reigned, and where life is sweet to all. But duty called her away.

She returned to Russia, and went first to Tsarsko-Selo* the favourite retreat of her imperial spouse. There she soon found the sorrows of the past. The same days of solitude returned again,—solitude the more deep, since Elizabeth had less sympathy than respect for her august grand-mother, and the marriage of the Grand Duke Nicholas a little later, with a daughter of the King of Prussia, did not give her the friend she might have anticipated and hoped for. Another princess, Helen Paulovna, arrived at the Court of St. Petersburg too late to make a profound impression on the character of an existence into which, nevertheless, she did pour some rays of joy. But Elizabeth sought her chief consolation in her charities, and in that religion of peace and love, which offers balm to the wounded heart. Shortly after the close of the war she founded an institution for the daughters of poor officers who

* Literally, the village of the czar.

had fallen during its continuance, and left their children orphaned and portionless. This she took under her own special patronage. Of the three illegitimate children who were born to Alexander, one only, a young girl, as beautiful as her mother, and most promising, was left to him. She formed his delight. But the health of Sophia N—— was delicate and fragile. If she was to be preserved, it was necessary that she should be removed from the severe and trying climate of Russia; and Alexander, urged by the physicians, was compelled to submit to a separation cruel to his heart. At that time the illicit bond between himself and the mother of the child was broken. A faithless wife, she had not shewn more constancy as a mistress, and the emperor had now only the remorseful sense of his guilt, and that one cherished daughter, as memorials of her who once had brought him so much joy. To dissipate the sense of her loss, and in order to fill the void in his heart, he gladly mingled in some of the glad scenes of happy family life. He occasionally went to pay visits to circles where mothers of families, full of grace and virtue, made the charm and blessing of a fire-side. There he demanded to be treated as a guest, as a friend, and not as a sovereign. He entered into the domestic conversation, and pleased himself with observing the order and management with which his hostesses, often Germans, arranged all within their dwellings. He admired their skill in producing comforts, and obtaining results,

notwithstanding their limited means, which he avowed, that he, with a legion of servants, and money at his command, almost beyond counting, could not enjoy. He found some solace for his grief in these innocent recreations; but even this was mingled with vexation. He observed that excellent and honourable men, friends of the houses which he favoured with his visits, abstained from presenting themselves there, lest they should fall under suspicion of courting imperial favour; whilst flatterers and parasites, and those who had solicitations to make, became their guests; then feeling the weight of his grandeur, which pressed upon him even at those moments when most he desired to disembarrass himself from it, he gave up the attempt to be a man with men; confined himself to his palace; and in its solitude cultivated the religious life, towards which his heart had been drawn ever since the burning of Moscow, and the incertitude of the campaign of 1813.

His young daughter retired from Paris to St. Petersburg, but was still an invalid. Her chest was affected, and consumption was menaced. It was against the advice of the physicians that she was recalled. She was now seventeen years of age, and the pure flame of a first love burned within her breast. A young Russian, the grandson of an aged man, whose long and respectable life had been entirely dedicated to the service of his country, had, with the consent of the emperor, received her plighted faith. All was ready for the union; but when the magnificent *trousseau*,

which had been ordered at Paris, arrived, she for whom it was destined was no more.* One morning, as Alexander was engaged in the review of his guard, one of his aides-de-camp approached him, and, with more than ordinary reverence and gravity in his mien, desired to speak with him. They conversed apart. The monarch appeared to be seized with illness; his handsome countenance became pale, and his air was changed; but regaining a measure of self-possession he summoned courage to continue the exercise.

The words, "I receive the reward of my deeds," were heard to escape from his agonized heart. His daughter had just expired.

They were significant words: they indicated the state of his mind. He entered upon a salutary judgment of himself, and received the blow as a punishment from God. He saw the extent of his guilt towards his virtuous wife; and that repentance, accompanied with such restitution as he might make, could now be the only means of expiation. The nobleness of his own soul felt this, and the obligations of religion more deeply confirmed the feeling; gratitude lent her contributing aid, for he was not left alone to mourn the object of his tender affections. Elizabeth had tears to shed for the daughter of her rival, and none sympathized more deeply than she with the suffering father. He began to see in her what his own people and Europe at large had long seen, an angel of goodness and

* Madame de Choiseul-Gouffier, "Mémoires Historiques sur Alexandre," p. 358.

29511

resignation; his former affection for her revived, and he sought to cause her to lose the bitter recollections of the past, by his constant, assiduous, delicate, and devoted attention. His respect for her, and his tenderness towards her, increased daily, and he seemed again to feel attachment for life in her all-powerful fascination.

But long continued sorrows had undermined Elizabeth's health; undetected by herself or by her skilful physician,* a chronic malady of the chest had made its inroads upon her constitution. Daily she lost flesh and strength, and at length the physicians declared that the terrible climate of Russia must destroy her, and they ordered that she should be retaken to her native air. Elizabeth, however, refused to comply with this advice, urging, in reply to all the representations that were made to her, that the wife of the Emperor of Russia should die no where else than in his dominions. It was then proposed to try the southern provinces of the empire. The Crimea was first proposed. Alexander, however, gave the preference to Taganrog, a small town, situated in latitude 47° 12′ 13″ on the sea of Azof, opposite to the town of that name, and to the *embouchure* of the Don, at 456 leagues, or 1826 versts from his habitual residence. The event proved that this sojourn was not more favourable than that of other Russian localities. Climate is determined by many causes in addition to that of degree of latitude. At Taganrog violent winds are frequent, and those of the north-east, blowing over frozen plains, where nothing

* See Note (14,) in the Appendix.

intercepts their sweep, chill the air excessively; further, these cold drying winds draw from the soil unhealthy exhalations; the autumn is rainy, and exposed to fog, and in that year especially, 1825-1826, the winter experienced all the rigours of the more northern parts of the empire.

Yet this was the place chosen as offering the most advantage of climate.* The departure of Elizabeth was determined, and Alexander declared that he would accompany her. Alarmed by the fears of the physicians, for a life the more dear that he saw it more and more endangered, he desired that he himself should preside over all the arrangements which might be made in a distant and little frequented spot. The place he knew to possess few resources; its chief promise of convenience arose from the fact of its being, after Odessa, the most important port of the south, on account of its situation near the mouth of the Don. The situation alone gives to Taganrog this pre-eminence, for the port is very shallow.† A journey of 1800 versts, after the many other journeys which Alexander had already made since the opening of the year, was a fatigue too great for him to sustain without injury, suffering as he still was from erysipelas. But he was accustomed to listen

* See Note (15,) in the Appendix on Taganrog.

† It has been pleasantly said that this port might serve well as a field of battle to a land army. In truth, the water very seldom reaches the town, and when the north-west wind blows for some time continuously, it retires as far as twenty versts. Merchandise and goods must be carried in *telagas* (a kind of cart), five or six versts from the town: then they must be put into shallow boats drawing very little water, which must carry them much further before they can be placed on board.

to no persuasions on the subject of his movements, and two or three thousand versts were nothing in his estimation; besides, on the present occasion, in the very fatigue of travelling, he sought his repose. He would fulfil a duty which was to appease his conscience. He preceded the empress by several days. She commenced her journey on the 15th September, 1825, accompanied by the Prince Peter Volkonski, and arrived at her destination after twenty days' travelling. The emperor received her at the last stage before Taganrog, and made his entry there with her on the 5th of October. He installed her in the large building situated above the strand, which has been called the castle, where he had caused apartments to be prepared for her, and where he also took up his own residence, tenderly watching her, and solicitous that nothing should be wanting which could procure her solace or pleasure. Touched by his attentions, the invalid became re-animated—felt anew the love of a life which had of late been indifferent to her: her health improved, and she went much into the open air, to enjoy the climate, which was then delicious, to gaze upon the magnificent spectacle of the sea, backed by a smiling landscape, and to receive the testimonies of affection, which were lavished by a population who delighted to see amongst them the imperial personages from whom they were usually separated by so great a distance. Never in her life had she been so happy; she wrote to her family and to those to whom she could open her heart; she blessed the sickness which had re-

stored to her her husband, and which kept him at her side. Alas, it was a short-lived happiness!

We are on the eve of a catastrophe; but, before entering upon the recital of it, let us return for an instant to St. Petersburg, in order to observe the departure of Alexander from that city, and to note some circumstances which cast strong light upon the monarch's state of mind. They will aid to initiate us into the mysteries of that existence which the ardour of his imagination and the keenness of his sensibility, unsupported by strength of character, rendered the sport of every impression.*

As is commonly the case with enthusiastic spirits, Alexander was sincerely religious; religion is the enthusiasm of the ideal; and though brought up by a philosophic grandmother, and by a liberal and almost free-thinking tutor, he was by no means exempt from the superstition which is so common amongst the Russians, even of the highest classes, where the external varnish of civilization frequently covers, without extinguishing, the vulgar prejudices and instinctive sentiments of the uncultivated man; besides, despite of

* We hope this recital will not be without interest to the reader, even if it be regarded only as a picture of manners: the details that are here offered are drawn from a pamphlet published at St. Petersburg, in 1827, in Russ and in German, entitled "The Last Days of the Emperor Alexander I. of glorious memory." This pamphlet may be considered as quasi-official, for it was submitted to several authorities. The anonymous author, M. Oertel, having shewn to the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg that part of his work which concerned himself and the church, the prelate, it is asserted, pointed out to him certain corrections and alterations; then changing his resolution, he handed the pen to him, and requested him to write after his dictation. The account is verified by witnesses.

culture, misfortune renders its victims superstitious; and, as we have seen, Providence had not spared sorrows to the man whose greatness all were ignorantly envying. He was continually occupied by dark presentiments; and in his present journey, and all the circumstances connected with it, he found fatal prognostics prophetic of death.

The close tie between Alexander and Madame Krudener, his frequent perusals of the Bible, and his long and solitary meditations, did not shake his attachment to the faith of his people. He felt that the essential doctrine of the gospel is alike for Catholics, Greeks, and Protestants, amongst whom, therefore, intercommunion should be easy; but, as head of the Græco-Russian Church, in which he had been educated, he felt it his duty to follow its practice, and to give his subjects the example of filial obedience to its ordinances.

It was his custom on all his journeys from St. Petersburg to start from the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Kasan, which had been opened and consecrated in his reign.

On this occasion, he took his departure from his metropolis on the 13th of September; that is, according to the "Julian Calendar," still in use with the Russians, and with all Christians of the East, who are not subject to the Pope, on the first of the month.*

* When at the close of the last century, Russia made the acquisition of Courland, the Protestant population of that Duchy was obliged to make a retrograde movement, and to renounce the Gregorian Calendar, which the religion of the empire does not admit. Who shall say that Poland will not have to submit to the same exaction?

On the 30th of August, according to the old style, the Russian Church celebrates the feast of Saint Alexander Newski, in commemoration of the translation of the relics of that great prince, from Vladimir to the borders of the Neva. On that day, all the clergy repair in procession from the cathedral of Kasan to a monastery of the first order (Lavra), founded by Peter the Great, on the spot where were landed the relics destined to sanctify a soil that had been so long in the possession of a heretical people, close neighbours of his own. It is the usual custom for the imperial family to join in the liturgy at the cathedral of the convent. Alexander presented himself there, and before quitting the holy place he notified to the metropolitan and to the Archimandrid of the Lavra that he should return there the day after the morrow,—that determined for his departure. It was unexpected tidings, for, as has been stated, the emperor, before commencing a journey, was in the habit of repairing to the Kasan Cathedral, there to pray and seek the divine blessing on his undertaking. But he still further surprised the chief bishop, by requesting him to chaunt a service at four o'clock in the morning in the full assembly of the ecclesiastics of the convent, at which he would be present. The "Official Report" states that the service which the emperor indicated was the *Te Deum*, but popular rumour declared that it was the service for the dead. It is also recorded in the "Official Report," that he added to his request the remark that it was needless his project should be made known, or

that when it was ended it should be proclaimed. His mind was filled with thoughts of death, and it was as an asylum for the dead, that he had chosen for his purpose the monastery of St. Alexander Newski. The consecrated ground around that convent, held peculiarly sacred, is the place of sepulture of many rich and illustrious families : various members of the reigning family who have not worn the crown are interred there, amongst these the two infant daughters of Alexander and Elizabeth; and near them reposes a czarina, the wife of the imbecile Ivan Alexeiovitch. There also Catherine II., having refused imperial sepulture to her unfortunate husband Peter III., caused him to be buried, though his son Paul, afterwards removed his ashes. Perhaps Alexander thought upon all these—upon his infant children; and though that other flower cut down in early blossom, Sophia N.——, did not sleep there, her father's spirit doubtless wandered after her shade also, when he repaired to pray in the asylum of death, before undertaking his distant journey, and leaving behind him the dust of objects so cherished.

He might also be occupied with thoughts of his own approaching end. He might desire to dedicate and resign to God the life which had been so lately menaced with the assassin's dagger, and which he felt was slowly passing from him by the insidious agency of disease.

On the day indicated, the venerable Seraphim,* me-

* He died, aged eighty years, on the 2nd February, 1843.

tropolitan of the diocese, at the head of all the monks of the monastery, habited in full robes, as for a great solemnity, awaited him at early dawn. If the popular voice is to be credited, the fraternity of the convent, with the metropolitan, wore the garb of mourning for the dead, but the official report states that they were attired in rich garments of crimson worked with gold, but not the most magnificent in the possession of the monastery; for it declares that the metropolitan decided that they should not wear their most sumptuous habiliments, being assembled to bid adieu to their monarch, on an occasion when affliction caused his journey. At that season of the year, the nights have already lost that remarkable and transparent light which, during the months of June and July, makes them in Russia like days without a sun. Petersburg was still enveloped in darkness, when the autocrat traversed the long and magnificent street, extending from the square of the Admiralty up to the monastery of St. Alexander Newski, which bears the name of the sainted prince, and forming a perspective of half a league in length before it turns to the left towards its termination, then abuts upon the Neva and the Lavra monastery.

When he appeared at the gate of the sacred enclosure, the dawn had scarcely begun to streak the sky. He was alone in his *calèche*, drawn by three horses abreast (*troika*). Not even a servant accompanied him. He was clad in a simple uniform; wearing no sword, his military casque was placed, as the Rus-

sians term it, *fourashka*, upon his head, and he was wrapped in a large cloak. He immediately alighted, kissed the cross which the metropolitan presented to him, and received the old man's blessing: the monks surrounded him, chaunting the canticle, "*Lord, save thy people!*" as they conducted him towards the porch of the cathedral. The outer gates were carefully reclosed, and the *cortége* passing the outer court of the magnificent temple, proceeded under its elegantly vaulted dome, and advanced towards the pompous mausoleum of the sainted warrior, constructed, as it is known, of massive silver richly chased. Before the monument is placed as a *prie Dieu*, a case of relics, containing fragments of the mortal remains of many heroes, and an object of the most fervent veneration of the faithful. Halting before these relics the prelate offered the prayer for travellers. A mass was then said, and at the reading of the gospel, Alexander advanced towards the open gates of the iconostase,* knelt before the altar, and besought the metropolitan to place upon his head the sacred volume, enriched with the most precious ornaments. One of the powerful sovereigns of the earth thus humbly prostrated himself before a servant of the King of kings. After the prayers were terminated, he rose, kissed the cross —the life-giving cross, as it is termed in the Russian church—and Seraphim blessed him with an image of

* An ornamented screen which conceals the altar from the worshippers, excepting when its three doors are opened, when it is partially revealed.

the Christ which was to accompany him on his journey; he pressed his lips upon that talisman for the Christian, and having offered his private devotions before the relics of the holy warrior, he took leave of the fraternity, who chaunted again, as they escorted him to the gates, "*Lord, save thy people!*"

Arrived in the open space, Seraphim ventured to request his imperial majesty to rest awhile in his *cell*, a term of religious signification, which must not be understood to the letter. "Well," replied Alexander, "be it so; but only for a few moments, for already I am half an hour late." The whole *cortége* repaired to the apartments of the metropolitan; but leaving the monks in an outer chamber, Seraphim introduced his sovereign into an inner room, of which he closed the doors. For a few moments both conversed standing; then the emperor seating himself, invited the bishop to do the same.

Seraphim said, "I know that your imperial majesty has felt particular interest in the *schimnik*."* Great renown of sanctity was attached, especially to Photius, Archimandrid of the ancient and rich convent of St. George, situated upon a tongue of land, which stretches into the lake Ilmen, two versts from Novogorod. It was to him probably that the metropolitan now made

* So are called monks who live immured in the interior of their convents in the deepest solitude, following strictly all the austerities prescribed to their order, and passing their lives in prayer and penance. These pious ascetics are venerated as saints, and the most celebrated monasteries esteem it an honour to enumerate, at least, one such amongst their inmates.

special allusion; for Alexander had in time past held conferences with that holy person, and had charged Seraphim only shortly before, to procure from him, for his own use, an image of Christ in mosaic, with the inscription, *Za pravaslavia* (for orthodoxy).*

The metropolitan continued, "We also for some time have had a *schimnik* within the walls of the holy Lavra; would it be the pleasure of your imperial majesty that he should be summoned?"

"Let it be so," replied the monarch; and in a few moments a venerable and dignified looking old man, of melancholy countenance and emaciated form, entered the room. The emperor received him with respect; conversed a short time with him; supplicated his blessing; and was about to take his departure; but the ascetic, with emotion, besought him to honour his cell also with a visit. Alexander consented; and was led by him thither.

What a scene was there presented! A black cloth covered the floor of the narrow cell; the walls were painted of the same sombre hue; a colossal crucifix occupied a considerable portion of the left side of the small apartment; benches of wood, painted black, were ranged around it; whilst the only light that entered was given by the faint glimmer of a lamp, which burned night and day, before the pictures of saints. When the monarch had crossed the threshold,

* We shall speak again of Photius, and of the magnificence of the convent of St. George, in a notice upon the Count of Araktchéieff in the Appendix to the volume. It was Photius who used his influence with Alexander to obtain the banishment of Gossner a Catholic apostle.

the hermit prostrated himself before the crucifix, and cried to his august visitor, "Sire, let us pray."

The three engaged in inaudible prayer; and the monk blessed the emperor with the crucifix. Some moments of silence succeeded, during which Alexander and the metropolitan, seated upon the black painted benches, contemplated the scene, whilst the hermit, by the monarch's desire, also sat. Alexander whispered in the bishop's ear, "Is this his only cell? Where is his bed? I see no couch."

"He sleeps upon this floor, stretched before the crucifix, at which he has now been praying," was the reply.

The monk had heard the words. "No, sire," he said, advancing, "It is not so. I have the same bed with every other man. Approach, and you shall see it." He introduced the emperor into a small recess, screened off from the cell; there, placed upon a table, was a black coffin, half open, and containing a shroud; it was surrounded by tapers, and the usual accompanying signals of death. "Here is my bed," he cried; "and not only mine, but the bed common to man. There, sire, we shall all rest in our last long sleep!"

The emperor was silent; deep in thought, he gazed upon the coffin; at length, the *schimnik* broke upon the pause. "Sire," he said, in a solemn tone, "I am an old man; I have seen much of the things of this world; listen to my voice: Before the great plague of Moscow, manners were pure, and the people were pious; after the plague, corruption crept in amongst us. The

year 1812 became a season of penitence and reform; but when the war was terminated, depravity prevailed more deeply than before. Thou, sire, art our lord and sovereign; the preservation of manners is confided to thee; thou art a son of the church, depository of the true faith; to thee it is commanded to love it, and to preserve it from every ill: such is the charge laid upon thee by the King of kings."

This was a common-place address; it could teach nothing new to the sovereign, nor did it place his duties before him in any very striking light.

It is possible that, in the printed account of the interview, a part of the speech may have been suppressed; and yet it is rather doubtful whether one of the monks, who were of all men most ignorant, most narrow-minded, and most cringing before power, would have possessed the moral courage to utter exhortations, warnings, or admonitions, with irresistible weight and energy. But, be this as it may, the mind and imagination of the czar were touched—the moment, the circumstances, and his own previous feelings, disposed him to receive impressions. Turning to the metropolitan, he said, "I have listened to long sermons, arranged with art, but never have I felt under them, as now under the short exhortations of this old man;" then, addressing him, he said, "I grieve that I have not had more of your acquaintance, but I shall return again."

Having once more received the *schimnik's* blessing, he quitted the cell, and, on his way to his *calèche*,

passed through two files of the brotherhood of the monastery, drawn up to await him in the court. He besought their prayers, and, receiving a last benediction from the metropolitan, got into his carriage, and, his eyes moistened with tears, and directed heavenward, he cried again to them, "Pray for me and for my wife;" and, as the horses drew him along, turned towards the monastery, and, bare-headed, made repeatedly the sign of the cross, and bent in reverence towards the cathedral.

They who believed in omens did not fail to note, that it was to a convent of the same saint that Alexander conducted his empress immediately after their arrival at Taganrog; and that it was there that, after a very short period, the population saw deposited the mortal remains of him whose coming amongst them had caused them so much joy.

It was a moment of strong emotion when he crossed the barrier. He was about to quit for some time, perhaps for ever, his beloved capital. It was illuminated by the first rays of an autumn sun. He caused his coachman to halt; rose, and, turning around on every side, carried his eyes over its magnificent extent: they rested upon its gilded domes and spires, especially upon that of St. Peter and St. Paul, glittering under the rising star of day, and upon the spire shooting from the fortress, in whose vaults reposed all his ancestors, since the date of Peter the Great. Then they were fixed upon the thousand palaces of the imperial city, still hushed in the silence of the early morning; and

when at length he withdrew his gaze, and pursued his course, it was with deep melancholy impressed upon his features.

At the *château* of Sarskoï-selo, situated on the road to Moscow, the separation from the imperial family, and from a mother truly venerated by all her sons, was not less depressing. After a short and painful interview, he quickly continued his course. He had with him a numerous suite. His principal travelling companions were the Prince Volkonski, one of the friends of his youth,* and his aide-de-camp-general, the Baron Diebitsch, a distinguished military man, who had been made over to him by the King of Prussia, to whom he had formerly served in the double capacity of aide-de-camp-general, and head of the army; to these was added his physician, Sir James Wylie, who had been about his person for thirty years, and who held the head medical department in the army of Russia.

The journey was prosperous, and, notwithstanding some stoppages, it was accomplished in twelve days.

* The Emperor Alexander, naturally affectionate and enthusiastic, had so many friends during a life of no great length, that we scarcely dare apply the word *friend* seriously to any. We are, moreover, not on Prussian, but on Russian ground. King Frederick-William III., consistent, firm, and constant in his sentiments, possessed a true friend in the person of General Koeckeritz, his first aide-de-camp; the delicacy and affection with which the monarch celebrated the jubilee of the fifty years' service of that faithful man, was most touching. An account of it is to be found in the interesting work, recently published by M. l'Évêque Vylert, "Characterzüge aus dem Leben de Kœnig Frederick-Willelmis III.," fol. 1, p. 114, *et seq.* This work is filled with the relation of traits which gladden the heart; it brings us into contact with some of the best persons whose existence has blessed this earth—but in writing of a Russian monarch, we repeat, we are on other ground.

The travellers passed over 150 versts a-day—a speed which proves Alexander's familiarity with the fatigues of locomotion. In fact, he was of a good constitution and robust, and heeded present cares and precautions only on account of repeated attacks of erysipelas. But a malady of spirit preyed upon the traveller; the thoughts of death never quitted him: a comet that was seen in the night strengthened these forebodings.

"Have you seen the comet?" he inquired one evening of his faithful coachman.

"Yes, sire."

"But do you know that it presages misfortune? Yet let the will of God be done."

During the ten days he spent at Taganrog, before the arrival of the empress, he was unceasingly occupied in providing for her comforts, and for the requirements of her condition; after her arrival he devoted his entire time to her: he was with her in her apartments, at table, and in her rides, walks, and drives. The physicians soon reported her health to be visibly and continuously improving; and her husband thought he might steal some days from his attendance upon her to devote to the cares of his empire. He visited the shores of the sea of Azof as far as the Don, which he ascended for many versts, stopping at the towns of Rostoff and Nakbitchevan, the first of which is exclusively inhabited by Armenians; from thence he repaired to Novo-Tcherkask, the capital of the territory of the Cossacks of the Don. He made a short digression into the stanitzas,

or villages of those shepherd warriors, and returned by Old-Tcherkask to the fortress of Azof, of great historic fame, but of small present importance. The mildness of the season was protracted, and at the entreaty of Count Michael Woronzow,* Governor-General of New Russia, he was induced to visit the Crimea, a portion of that government. The peninsula is most valuable to Russia on account not only of the mildness of its climate, but also of its vicinity to Constantinople. The plan of this expedition was accurately arranged, and it was to occupy seventeen days.

We shall accompany the monarch in his excursion, even at the risk of wearying the patience of readers who may be eager to arrive at the crisis of events.

Having proposed the study of Russia as the object of our work, we ought to embrace every occasion that may cast a light upon its various characteristics, moral and physical: the Crimea, as yet little known, is one of its portions most fruitful in the picturesque and the curious, and offers much to the varied observation of a student of the country.

* This personage, who was made, in 1845, prince and commander-general of the army, and of the provinces of the Caucasus, with extraordinary powers, which were again enlarged in 1846, has rendered, and is still rendering, eminent service to the empire. Educated in England, where his father was Russian Ambassador, he is imbued with Western civilization, more completely than is usual even with the most elevated of his countrymen. He is distinguished by integrity, abilities, and perseverance, which are by no means common in Russia; these have procured for him the unlimited confidence of the Emperor Nicholas, whilst the benevolence and uprightness of his character have ensured for him universal esteem. There are few Russians of his caste: we shall have afterwards to recall the reader's attention to him.

Leaving Taganrog on the 1st of November, the imperial party passed the Memoronite and German colonies established in the steppe which lies along the river Molotcka, and arrived, without having been able entirely to escape the exhalations of the putrid sea, in the evening of the 5th at Simferopol, a large village interspersed with gardens, to which the Russians have given the classical name of Taurida, making it the seat of government. There are 2,275 houses, and 11,000 inhabitants, of whom only 100 are Russians. Tartars form the majority of the population (7,904), but there are also Bohemians, Jews, Karaites, and Greeks established there. The Governor, M. Narishkin, had only received eight days' notice of the intended visit of his imperial master, when he had orders to provide that horses for nine post-carriages, and a *britchka*, should be stationed at the various posting-houses on the line which the emperor must pass. To the great regret of the population of the capital, Alexander rested only one night amongst them. With the early morning he continued his southward course into that beautiful country, which enjoys a sun and vegetation like those of Italy, being well sheltered from the biting winds of the north. From Simferopol the track lay over mountains by roads little traversed. Of these mountains the most elevated is Tchatyr Dagh, from whose summit the traveller sees extending around him the entire peninsula in an incomparable panorama.

In order to gain Joursouff, seat of the Count Wo-

ronzow, the emperor travelled thirty-five versts on horseback, whilst his servants received orders to wait for him, with the carriages and baggage, at the village of Baïdar, where he was to rejoin them in a few days. The fatigue of those days, together with the diet on which he fed, (he ate much of the delicious fruit of the country, which was every where offered to him), produced a disorder of the stomach, which laid the foundation of a more serious malady. The next day, the party arrived at Aloupka, on the sea coast of the south. It is a Tartar village, situated at the foot of the Aï-Petrei, perhaps the ancient Kriumetopon. The celebrity of Aloupka is derived from the beauty of its site,* and from the fact, that there is situated the magnificent castle of the Prince Woronzow, built in the gothic style, and which has cost millions, though it is not yet completed. The Duke of Ragusa compares this splendid mansion to the most superb castles of England; other travellers† do not agree with him, and criticise the selection of the site. Alexander wished to see it, and was conducted thither by its possessor, a man of elegant manners and agreeable conversation. From thence, a road, along the beach, leads northwest towards Alouschta. While pursuing this road, the eye rests with delight on the garden of Russia, the only part in her entire territories, perhaps, where the climate is continually mild. High mountains shelter

* "The abundance of streams and cascades," says M. de Castelnau, "gives to Aloupka some resemblance to Switzerland; but its vicinity to the sea, and its fertility, claim for it even a superiority."

† Among whom is Kohl.

it from the cold winds of the north, and the irregularity of the surface, which is frequently rocky, gives it variety, notwithstanding the monotony of the sea, which drives against the strand. From Aloupka to Talta, beautiful seats succeed one another, and placid villages, peopled by idle Tartars, who appear to be never without their long pipes, are scattered over the landscape. First is presented Myskhor, the property of the Narishkin family; then Khouries, an establishment founded by the Prince Galitsin. Further on is Livadia, which belongs to the Count Potocki; and nearer to the sea is Orianda, a noble domain, most beautifully situated, but where art has as yet done little to assist nature.* The emperor had just become possessed of this estate, in consequence of an exchange with the Count Koucheleff-Bezborodko. He could not pass it without making it a visit; then being near Talta, a small port known to the ancients, and which is reached by crossing a valley of great beauty, he repaired thither, and from thence to Nikito, where, not far from a Greek convent, is an imperial garden, quite a horticultural establishment. There are cultivated grapes of 400 different kinds. From thence he returned to the castle of Aloupka, by the same road. Wishing to pay a visit to the Princess Galitsin, he went unaccompanied to her little colony, which was at the time heavily afflicted with an epidemic fever, then prevalent through the whole peninsula. He walked much, ate many different

* Nicholas took his empress to visit it, and, as it pleased her, he gave it to her. It is said that she is to pass the approaching winter there.

kinds of fruit that were offered to him, and passed the night with a native Tartar, who was doubtless delighted to be able to exercise towards the great emperor of the North, the hospitality which is so justly vaunted amongst the people of the East. Alexander desired to see all indifferently, and to mingle alike with Christians, Mussulmans, or Jews. His excursion charmed him by its novelty, and he made many walking expeditions in the environs of the Prince Woronzow's estate; at length he continued his course. But such a delightful road as the one from Nikitka to Aloupka does not extend further.

In order to arrive at Mordvinoff, it was necessary to traverse a steep mountain, a passage of 40 versts, on horseback. He found his carriage at Baïdar, a village situated in the midst of an almost circular valley, renowned for its picturesque beauty, and inhabited by Mussulmans, at once supine, good-natured, and hospitable. From thence the party continued their route to Sevastopol, the Toulon of the Black Sea. Alexander made a very considerable part of this distance on horseback. He wished first to see Balaklava, whose narrow port presents a very singular form, and where there are some remarkable old ruins. Then he felt himself attracted towards the Greek convent of St. George, near which, report says, rose that ancient temple of Diana, of which Iphigenia was for some time the involuntary priestess. Fascinated by all that he saw, he neglected himself, by exposure, without sufficient covering, to the cool of the evening air, so pernicious in countries

subject to epidemics. On the 18th of November he arrived at Sevastopol, between eight and nine in the evening, and went immediately, as was his custom, to the principal church, by torch-light; then he proceeded to review the fleet, before he allowed himself to take the repose of which, after such a day's fatigue, he must have felt the pressing need.

The 9th of November, entirely devoted to the fleet, was again a day of great exertion. After having seen a new vessel launched, he accepted an invitation to breakfast on board; then he repaired to the military hospital, at three versts' distance from the town, devoted some hours to giving audience to distinguished persons, who craved that favour, and, in order to obtain a few moments' relief, went to walk upon the shore.

A sloop at anchor next received orders to transport him to a vessel of the line which lay near, from whence he requested to be disembarked at the opposite side of the river's estuary; there he inspected the naval hospital and the barracks; still some versts were to be traversed before he could go to rest. He dined with all the general officers who were on the spot at that important place — Vice-Admiral Greig at their head; and, after having made his *adieux*, he sat up till a late hour of the night, employed in state affairs, with Baron Diebitsch.

The next day, new undertakings and new fatigues awaited him. First he was to see the fortress, built upon an eminence on the north-west, and intended to defend the entrance of the magnificent port which,

furnished with a road, forms one of the finest maritime localities known. But, too far from the sea, this fortress does not effectively cover either the port or the town, and thus fails of its object. At least, such is the judgment of the Marshal Duc de Ragusa; it is true, however, that the works of the fortification were not completed when he described it. To the forts, Alexander and Constantine, which were finished several years ago, is now added that of Nicholas, more especially designed to protect the port and the basins; and in which three tiers of bastions, placed one above the other, hold 260 cannon, which, with the cannon of the other forts, make 550 guns.

At length the *cortège* took the direction of Simferopol. Alexander had formerly visited Baktchi-Saraï, the ancient residence of the Khans of the Crimea; he could not exclude it from his present tour, for he retained the most agreeable recollections of that place. Notwithstanding the gardens which give it its name, (Palace of Gardens,) and the ever-playing fountains, he at once saw that it was falling into decay, and it did not revive in him the pleasant impressions of his former visit. He passed the night, between the 10th and 11th of November, in the palace of the ancient Tartar sovereigns, whose sabres had more than once made havoc within the walls of Moscow. That seraglio, in miniature, has since been entirely restored, and at its base stretches, at the foot of a crumbling mountain, the long street which forms the town of Baktchi-Saraï. On the morning of the following day he re-

paired to Djoufout-Kalek, situated at an inconsiderable distance from the town, upon a barren and isolated elevation, but remarkable as the seat of a colony of Jews—(Karaites), whose synagogues he inspected. On his return, he stopped at a Greek convent. The party betook themselves to the palace of Ghiraï, in order to dine there. Alexander received at his table, that day, the Mufti of the Mussulmans of the South, and eight Mourzas, or Tartar princes; after which he wished to see the interior of some mosques, and to be present at the celebration of their worship; to do which, he went thither as a native of the place.

Before retiring to rest, he summoned his physician, and expressed his fears to him respecting the health of the empress, who had just been informed of the decease of King Maximilian of Bavaria, her brother-in-law.* The tidings he feared would cause an exeitement, the effects of which might be most prejudicial in her then state. He regretted exceedingly to be absent from her at such a moment.

At the close of their interview, and, as if by mere accident, the emperor remarked to Sir James Wylie, that his stomach was disordered, and that he had enjoyed little rest for several nights; "but," he added, smilingly, "notwithstanding that, I have no need of you, nor of your Latin medication; I shall be able to treat myself; besides which, my trust is in God, and in my good constitution." The English physician had perfect license with Alexander; he had been about his person

* He died the 13th October, 1825.

for many years, and had recently been the means of saving him from an amputation of the leg, when his brother physicians, fearing that the erysipelas would result in gangrene, were disposed to resort to that extreme measure. Sir James had opposed them strongly, declaring that he would answer with his own head for the life of the monarch. But, notwithstanding his master's strong attachment to him, the man of medicine could seldom make himself heard when he advised remedies or preservatives; now he vainly represented the wisdom, nay, the necessity, of counteracting an incipient illness by immediate treatment.

"I have no confidence in your potions; my life is in the hands of God; nothing can stand against his will. Speak to me no more of treatment," cried Alexander, in reply to the entreaties which were made to him.

The indisposition did not decrease. The late habitual spirits of the traveller vanished; he slept much in his carriage, and recovering his consciousness, remained for hours together sunk in abstraction, which, to judge from his countenance, must have been of a painful character.

But, notwithstanding his illness, the emperor would not slacken his exertions; he was still anxious to draw from his journey every possible result. Arrived on the 12th at Kozloff, or Rupatorie, another post on the western side of the Crimea, he again visited churches, mosques, barracks, and the quarantine establishment. He conversed long upon the quay with the captain of a Turkish bark, and received a petition from a deputa-

tion of the inhabitants, in which they supplicated for the re-establishment of the ancient freedom of trade, which had been withdrawn for the last six years, whilst the favour of the government had been extended to Theodosia (the ancient Caffa), to their detriment.

At Perekop, a town situated on the isthmus which joins the peninsula to the continent, the party again stopped. Though now a prey to fever, Alexander visited its hospital; but from that time his return to Taganrog was hastened. The party gained the Dneiper, and in ascending it, visited Znamenka, crossing in haste the steppe of the Nogais, which forms the continental portion of the government of Taurida. At Orekoff, they passed the boundary line of that government, and entered into that of Ekaterinoslaff, of which they followed the southern limit as far as Mariopol; where the sea of Azof reappeared before their eyes. From thence to Taganrog, they had only to cross a little reach of the country of the Cossacks of the Don. It was well that they were near home, for in the town or Mariopol, where a Greek colony found employment in rearing silk-worms, Alexander felt that shivering which is an early symptom of intermittent fever. He communicated the fact to Sir James Wylie; but the speed with which he travelled did not allow the adoption of sufficient measures.

On the 17th of November, the day which had been all along determined for his return, he found himself again in Taganrog. Prince Volkonski, to whose

care he had committed his wife, came to meet him. When he inquired after his health, Alexander replied, "Well enough, save that I have caught a touch of the fever of the Crimea, and despite its much boasted climate, I am happy to have chosen Taganrog for the abode of the empress."

The prince who had passed his boyhood much with the emperor, and was on terms of familiarity with him, conjured him to take care of his precious health, and not to treat it with the careless indifference which had been his custom at twenty years of age.

Alexander scarcely listened: he was eager to reach the empress's apartments, where he passed the remainder of that evening. He dined with her the following day, after which he transacted state business with his ministers; but in the evening the fever returned, and he sent to request her to repair to him, and pass some hours with him. She quitted his room at ten at night, not without much anxiety, for his illness had assumed a determined character. It was declared to be an intermittent fever, accompanied by disturbance of the digestive organs and of the bilious secretions. Despite his fatalism and his dislike to the application and remedies of medical skill, he was at length persuaded to yield himself to the counsel of his advisers. That evening, in writing to his mother to apprize her of his return from the Crimea, he informed her that he was not well, but added that his indisposition was not of an alarming character. The next day, the 18th, he himself gave the word of order,

Taganrog; as Louis XVIII. on the eve of his death had given the two words *St. Denis and Givet.* For Alexander, as for the French king, this was the last time he performed that duty.

During the 19th November, (a gloomy day in his recollection, for it was the anniversary of the terrific inundation of the preceding year,) his malady gained strength. It would have been a wise and proper step to send for some skilful practitioner from the Crimea, accustomed to deal with the disease under which he was labouring; but the idea was not presented in time to be acted upon. The first physician of the emperor durst not speak to him authoritatively; perhaps he committed some error in pursuing a treatment which too much impaired his strength. Various criticisms have been passed upon his treatment; but what are the conjectures of human science before the impenetrable mysteries of a death-seizure? Without entertaining any apprehension of his danger, the emperor yet permitted the prince Volkonski to write to the empress-mother to inform her of the state of her son. Two days later, he allowed General Diebitsch to write the same tidings to the Grand-Duke Constantine, who was in Poland.

On the 21st, a favourable change took place; but its promise was deceitful. Till that time the monarch had been able to rise; now excessive weakness confined him to a divan, placed in his cabinet, which became his bed of death. A large entrance hall separated the apartment of the empress from that of her husband.

She was scarcely ever away from his side; placed near his couch, she tended him with those thousand small, but delicate and tender attentions, which woman knows how to lavish, when her heart is deeply interested, which she often bestows in charity on the stranger, and which will ever make the honour of her sex. Witness of the danger which menaced him, she thought no more of her own health. What was to her her life, illumined though it was with a late ray of happiness, compared with that which she desired to save? She watched constantly at his pillow; never left him, and only on the urgent solicitations of those about her, seized his moments of calm or sleep, to take, still at his side, a little of that repose which nature demanded. She appeared, under the requirements of the occasion, to have recovered her former health and strength. Her anxiety stimulated her courage, which never abandoned her till the close of the scene: her conduct won the warmest admiration of the afflicted and dismayed group about the imperial pair.

From the 22nd to the 26th, the paroxysms of fever gained strength. The patient often swooned; bathed in perspiration, he would remain long silent and apparently unconscious. Lieutenant-General Count de Witt had recently arrived at Taganrog from Little Russia.* It was not possible to conceal from the

* Count de Witt was informed of the existence of a body of conspirators by an agent of government, who had feigned to join it. De Witt was the commander of the regiments of cavalry colonized in Little Russia, and descendant of the grand pensionary of Holland, whose possession of the beautiful Greek Sophia has made so widely known.

emperor the bad news of which he was the bearer. The reader will not have forgotten the revelations of Sherwood. A plot had long existed against Alexander's life, and he knew it; he was in possession of some part of its details, as will appear from the following conversation which he held, after his arrival at Taganrog, with Arnoldi, the major-general of artillery.*

"Are you acquainted with Colonel Pestel?" Alexander asked him one day.

"Yes, sire; he is my brother-in-law, and we have served together."

"He wears a garb which conceals criminal designs. I have my eye upon him."

The tidings brought by General de Witt, awoke all Alexander's painful recollections; and from that time he said he was disgusted with life.

His physician, on one occasion, proposing to him to submit to the application of leeches, the monarch replied,

"My friend, it is my nerves which demand your care; they are in a state of frightful derangement."

"Alas!" rejoined Wylie, "that is a case more common with sovereigns than with ordinary mortals."

"True," Alexander exclaimed, "and with me in particular there are many reasons why it should be so, and at this moment more than at any other."†

* We have this from the lips of the general, a brave and experienced soldier.

† We take these words as Sir James Wylie has recorded them in his account, which was also signed by Doctor Stoffregen.

The state of his mind was betrayed on several other occasions. On the 26th, he exclaimed, as he fixed his eyes with a terrified look upon his physicians,

"My friend, what an action! what a horrible action!" Sir James deposed to this exclamation, and others have recorded similar ones.

"Ah, the monsters, the ungrateful monsters! I designed nothing but their happiness," he often repeated. And, in truth, his intentions had always been benevolent and generous. Whilst we deplore that his last moments should have been thus embittered, that he should not have been permitted to yield up his soul to God in peace and calmness, and to turn his thoughts exclusively, at that solemn moment, upon the mysteries of eternity, we cannot, at the same time, but execrate the dark projects of men who plotted crimes and gave the name to them of patriotism.

It could not any longer be doubted, that his disease was typhus, which skilful physicians have often mistaken for a bilious, inflammatory, or unintermitting fever. When entreated to submit to the measures prescribed, he exhibited stubbornness and impatience, which were sometimes expressed upon those around him, and which deprived the English physician of his self-possession; he despaired of the life of his patient, and communicated the fact to Prince Volkonski, who, persuaded that religion now was more efficacious than the human aid of the physicians, and conquering his own feelings, ventured to utter words to Elizabeth, in which he avowed his belief that the time was come when

the emperor ought to fulfil his duties as a Christian. The empress, almost overwhelmed with grief, summoned all her firmness, and declared herself ready to second the purpose of the prince. She repaired to the bedside, from which she had been only for a moment withdrawn, and, taking Alexander's hand, gently intimated her wishes.

"Am I then so very ill?" he asked in reply to the empress. "No, my husband, but you have refused all other remedies; at least, then, try this." "Willingly," he rejoined, and summoned Sir James Wylie.

"They have spoken to me of the holy communion," he said, "In what condition am I really? Am I then near my end?" "Yes, sire," the faithful servant replied, whilst sobs choked his utterance, "your imperial majesty has rejected my prescriptions: I now speak not as a physician, but as an honest man. It is my duty as a Christian to tell you that you have no time to lose." The emperor seized Wylie's hands and held them long firmly pressed between his own. He was then in so high a state of fever, that it was judged proper to delay the taking of the sacrament till the next day.

But early in the morning of the 27th, he became so much worse, that it was necessary to advise the empress to send for his confessor without delay. At six o'clock the archpriest Feodotoff entered the cabinet of the emperor, bearing the cross in his hands. Alexander, raising himself with difficulty, said to the empress, "I should wish to be alone!"

All about him instantly withdrew; and Elizabeth gained a moment to give free vent to her tears, which, in the presence of her husband, she had restrained with infinite difficulty. The details of that confession have never passed the lips of the priest who seceived it; but some of the less important circumstances attending his death have transpired. The sovereign desired the ecclesiastic to be seated, and to deal with him as he would with the humblest of his subjects. The interview was short; and, before taking the sacrament, Alexander begged that the empress might be summoned, and it was before her that he received the holy elements. Then the confessor joined his supplications to hers, that the emperor would use the means prescribed by his physicians, and especially that he would submit to the application of leeches, which were recommended. He no longer resisted, and from that time obeyed every direction. Turning to Elizabeth he said,

"I never felt greater inward peace; I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

The physician of the state-major established at Taganrog was now in consultation with Sir James Wylie and Doctor Stroffregen.

Erysipelas again appeared; this symptom alarmed Alexander, and he observed, "I shall die like my sister." He referred doubtless to the Grand-Duchess Catherine, Queen of Wirtemburg, who died in 1810. She had been married to the Prince of Oldenburg; and, at the time of the conference of Erfurt, might

have become Empress of the French, but for the energetic resistance of her mother, who was less dazzled than her son by the brilliancy of Napoleon.

The invalid passed the 28th in a state of lethargy, apparently without consciousness, although continually seized with nervous convulsions. When he recovered a little from these paroxysms, his pulse was at 125. He continued in this state till the morning of the following day. About eight o'clock a slight change for the better took place. External applications had recalled him from his lethargy. He opened his eyes, and seeing the empress at his bed-side, he took her hands, kissed them, and pressed them against his heart; he saluted the Prince Volkonski with a smile, who, taking his hand, carried it respectfully to his lips. The emperor made a sign to him of gentle reproach, for he had never permitted his friend Volkonski to use towards him the customary tokens of reverence. He had got from the prince a promise that, whatever might happen, he would not quit the empress, till he had seen her safely in the bosom of the imperial family. Sir James Wylie now announced to her that there was still hope; filled with joy, which she was afraid to encourage, she seized the first moment when he slept, to communicate to the empress-mother the happy tidings.* The despatch written by

* Her letter was as follows:—"Dear Mamma,—I was not in a condition to be able to write to you by yesterday's post. To-day, thanks to the Supreme Being, there is a very decided amendment in the state of the emperor, who is an angel of goodness in the midst of his sufferings. Towards whom will God manifest his infinite mercy, if not to him?

general Diebitsch, must, she knew, have caused the deepest alarm and grief to Marie Foedorovna; and each letter had to traverse a distance of 450 leagues before it could be placed in her hands.

Alas! the revival of hope was of no long continuance. But the tidings which reached St. Petersburg on the morning of the 8th of December, were spread instantaneously through the city, and caused joy in the entire population, which, a very short time later, was to be plunged into deeper grief than that anticipation had already shadowed forth.

The night brought an increase of some of the worst symptoms of the malady. The invalid was violently convulsed; but towards noon of the following day he was again for a time relieved. His prostration of strength, however, was more and more alarming; and at length agonising pain supervened. In the night of the 30th, in this affecting state of things, the Prince Volkonski felt it is duty to make an effort to remove the empress from his side, having obtained a mansion in the town for her use. She would not hear of separation. "I am persuaded," she said to the prince, "that you know how to commiserate my affliction. You do not believe that the allurement of a crown was what attached me to my husband! I implore you, then, not to remove.

But, ah! what cruel moments have I not passed; and you, dear mamma, I can conceive *your* anxiety. The bulletins will have told you his state yesterday, and last night. To-day, even Sir James Wylie considers the case of the invalid more satisfactory. But he is feeble in the extreme. I am so little myself, that I cannot write at greater length. Dear mamma, pray with us, pray with 50,000,000 of men, that God may be pleased to grant the recovery of our beloved sufferer."

me from his side in his last moments." He forebore to urge the point.

Remedies were now ineffectual. The vital functions had stopped. On the morning of the 1st of December, the patient opened his eyes, and, though the power of speech was gone, he recognised all who stood around his bed.

It may be conceived with what feelings Prince Volkonski and General Diebitsch, those faithful servants and attached friends of Alexander, watched his death-bed. The loss was irreparable to them, and its consequences to the empire were not easily to be calculated. This, however, was not their only subject of distress. Diebitsch was now in possession of a clue to the plot which had so long been weaving. Alexander was past the reach of the assassin's dagger; but he was not the only victim indicated by the revelations made to Diebitsch. It was necessary to act—to act with vigour, decision, and promptitude. His master not being in a situation to give orders, Diebitsch did not hesitate, on his own personal responsibility, to take such measures as the urgency of the case required.* He was awaiting their effects; and he foresaw that the death, now hourly expected, might be the signal for a general outbreak.

By an almost imperceptible sign, the emperor bade his wife draw near. He once more tenderly pressed her hand, as if to bid her an eternal adieu. Then,

* See the Imperial Rescript of the 14th (26th) July, 1826, in which Nicholas recognised the services rendered by the General at that critical moment.—"German Gazette of St. Petersburg," 1826, No. 58.

relapsing into a lethargy, in a few moments he breathed his last sigh. This happened at ten minutes before eleven o'clock in the morning. Elizabeth, almost stifled by suppressed emotion, herself closed his eyes, bound with her own handkerchief the lower part of his face, elevated the cross, the symbol of salvation, above him, and blessed him. Then, embracing him a last time, and casting her eyes towards a holy picture, she prayed, "Saviour! pardon me all my sins. It is at thy will that he is taken from me!" Returning to her own apartment, she gave free vent to her grief. A tie, strengthened by thirty-two years, and which had always been sacred to her, was dissolved. She had forgotten the years of her own suffering, and of his indifference, in her late happiness. An existence, more dear to her than her own, was prematurely closed; the husband, whom God had taken from her at the very moment when his long-extinguished tenderness was revived in full force, was only forty-eight years of age. Her life had been gladdened by an unlooked-for renewal of happiness. She had abandoned herself, with all her soul, to the delight of this renovation; but the charm was now broken; the joy was fled; yet the separation left not those bitter regrets which would have accompanied it had it happened at an earlier date. For some weeks, he whom she mourned had bestowed upon her marks of the most sincere attachment. She wept long; but she was consoled by the belief that Alexander was all her own, and that when her death occurred, which she

felt could not be now far distant, she should rejoin him, never more to be separated.

An irresistible attraction drew her continually to the chamber of Death; and, by the side of the corpse, she addressed to heaven the most fervent prayers for his soul.

The following day, urgent entreaties alone sufficed to induce her to remove to the house which Prince Volkonski had obtained for her use; and, though she did at length accede to the persuasions of those about her, she returned daily to pass some time in the presence of the mortal remains of her beloved husband.

Very shortly after the death of the emperor, she addressed to the empress-mother the following letter, which has acquired an historical fame. "Mamma! Our angel is in heaven, and I exist still upon the earth. Who would have thought that I, feeble and wasted, should have survived him? Mamma, do not abandon me, for I am utterly alone in this world of grief. Our dear departed one wears in death his own benevolent expression; his smile proves to me that he is happy, and that he sees other things than he beheld while he was amongst us. My only consolation under this irreparable loss, is, that I shall not long survive him,—that I hope to rejoin him soon."

Nor was her hope deceived; a little more than five months, and she was with her "angel in heaven."

Some days were devoted to the pious duties which his friends desired to render to the inanimate body; the third day a surgical examination took place, and a

considerable quantity of water was found in the head. The body was embalmed, though imperfectly, owing to the impossibility of procuring all that was requisite in a place on the very confines of Europe. This done, it was laid upon a bed in the great hall in the imperial mansion, where it remained for some time exposed to the view of those who desired to pay it a last tribute of respect. On the 23rd of the month it was removed with all the pomp circumstances would permit, under the care of the Bishop of Ikaterinoslaff, Cherson, and Tauridon, to the church, where it was to remain until orders from the supreme power should arrive respecting its final destination. The church chosen was that of St. Alexander Newski, called also the Church of Jerusalem, belonging to the Greek convent, situated at one of the extremities of the town. The chief regiment of Cossacks of the Don, with the Ataman, or Hetman, at their head, were to attend the removal of the body on horseback, accompanied by their artillery; with the Cossacks were the imperial guard also, which had been sent from St. Petersburg, and the garrison of the place: these formed into files, and escorted the *cortège.* Several Russian generals immediately preceded and followed the body, carrying on velvet cushions the orders which the emperor had worn, and a large concourse of the inhabitants, all exhibiting the deepest grief, added solemnity to the scene.

In the small church, on an elevation ascended by twelve steps, and covered with black, the coffin was placed upon a bier, where also was deposited the impe-

rial crown; around it were many lighted tapers; there the bishop, surrounded by his clergy, Russian and Greek, performed the funeral service.

That small church contained the remains of the emperor, until they were removed from it to go the long journey they must make, before they could repose with those of his ancestors in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, attached to the fortress of St. Petersburg.

On the 25th of March, 1826, they were interred there; nearly four months having elapsed since the day which terminated his earthly career.

When the body was removed, the enthusiastic affection of the people was testified all along the route. At Taganrog the children of the desert mingled their prayers and their grief with those of the Christian population, and during the whole journey the inhabitants flocked from the districts around, to meet the coffin and to prostrate themselves before it in a spirit almost of adoration. Every one wished to kiss the bier which enclosed the ashes of his much-cherished monarch; each desired to pray at its side.

On the first of December, the morning of Alexander's death, a courier arrived at Taganrog with fresh intelligence. Captain Maiborodo made a communication, to the effect that it had been ascertained that the volcano which had long muttered was ready to burst forth. The horizon was dark; on every side were threatenings of the tempest; none could answer for the future.

A fearful outcry, which doubtless originated in

Russia, was quickly echoed through Europe,—"Alexander has fallen by assassination!" Such was the report spread abroad. "His amiable qualities, his generous heart, his noble nature, did not suffice to preserve him from the fate of all his male predecessors down to Peter III." Our readers know how largely that report was believed; and how long it was* sought to be impressed. Ivan Antonovitch, Peter III. Foedorovitch, and Paul I. Peterovitch, all met a violent death; an end not less tragic seemed reserved for the eldest son of Paul, but Providence willed that the crime should not be accomplished; and the memory of the best-intentioned of princes is not connected with so dark a fate.

* It has been with a view to the interest of truth and justice, that we have thought it right to enter into minute details even at the risk of wearying the reader. They can leave no doubt upon any mind. For why, if Alexander had been assassinated, should the fact be denied? The published account of the trials ensuing upon his death, has proved to the world that he was marked out for the assassin's dagger. Wherefore then deny it if he had fallen by its edge?

CHAPTER III.

AN INTERREGNUM.—THE CONTEST OF GENEROSITY BETWEEN TWO BROTHERS.

THE order of succession to the throne was at the date of our history indisputably established in Russia. Michael Foedorovitch Romanoff, who by the free election of the principal members of the clergy, nobility, and commonalty, had been preferred to the princes of the house of Rurik, had received the crown on the condition that it should descend hereditarily by right of primogeniture. Peter the Great had, it is true, with the view of carrying his designs into complete accomplishment, disturbed this order of things by the fatal ukase of the 4th (16th) February, 1722, which gave the Russian sovereign the right of choosing his successor; nor was the choice even limited to the imperial family. From this originated those sad, unhappy, and protracted disorders which marked the Russian history during the eighteenth century, when the crown was disposed of by plots within the palace, and was the price of the most successful intrigue or the most audacious violence. Paul I. wisely put an end to a disastrous anarchy, disgraceful to a power which Catherine II.

had caused to rank among the first of Europe, though she had herself arrived at the helm of power by its influence.

Paul was at all times inclined to counteract the proceedings and policy of his mother. He, by his act of the 4th (16th) April, 1797, re-established the succession by hereditary descent in the male line, and only on the extinction of every male heir was the crown to devolve to a woman. In such case the throne was to belong to that princess, who at the time of the decease of the last emperor was his nearest relation; and in default of direct heirs from her, the other princesses imperial were to follow in the order of their relationship.

This arrangement had been confirmed by the Emperor Alexander in the year 1807, and it was strengthened by an act of his, bearing date the 20th March, (1st April,) 1820; in which he also decreed that the issue of marriages recognized and authorized by the reigning emperor, and who should themselves contract marriages recognized and authorized by him, should alone enjoy that right of succession to the throne which had been established by Paul.

Nothing could be more complete, more rational, or more clear than the law of succession. It existed, moreover, in full force and vigour.

The wife of Alexander had brought him only two daughters. They had died in infancy; but had they been living, they could not have succeeded to the throne while their uncles, the direct male heirs, were

living. Alexander left three brothers; the Grand-Duke Constantine, born in 1779; the Grand-Duke Nicholas, born in 1796; and the Grand-Duke Michael, born in 1798. One of these three brothers (Nicholas) had a son born in 1818; there were therefore four male heirs in the imperial family, which numbered many princesses, two of whom had been married to foreigners,—one to the pupil of Goethe, the Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar; and the other to the King of Holland.

By virtue of the act of Paul I., the crown belonged incontestably to the Grand-Duke Constantine. No act, however, had designated him its presumptive heir. During the reign of Alexander, the question respecting the succession, so far as the public were informed, had lain in abeyance. Alexander, in the event of the death of Elizabeth, might marry again, and give a direct heir to the throne. The subject, as we have said, had not been mooted. The title of Cæsarovitch* which Constantine bore, by no means indicated hereditary right. The Emperor Paul, who had himself enjoyed that title before his accession to the throne, had conferred it in 1799, on his second son, as a reward of his honourable conduct in the Italian campaign.

Assuredly Constantine had by birth a right to the throne, and needed no public proclamation of his title to establish his claim, in the event of his brother's demise without male heir of his body; yet prudence

* Cæsarovitch and Czarovitch are titles essentially different, as we shall explain under Note (1,) of the Appendix.

might have suggested such an act; for in a country where the government of an autocrat is supported only by religious faith, and not by public institutions, it is important to remove every shadow of doubt respecting the transmission of the sovereign power, and to define strictly but intelligibly the order of succession.

The multitude, indeed, entertained no doubt that at the death of Alexander the imperial crown would pass to his next brother, and were, to a certain extent, resigned to the prospect, although it inspired them with alarm rather than with satisfaction.

Constantine, it was feared, would renew the miseries of the reign of his father Paul. He, of all Paul's sons, was the only one that resembled him either in features or in character; the others had taken their stamp rather from their mother, the Princess of Wirtemburg, a woman of great beauty and remarkable qualities of mind. Constantine was still more ugly than his father; he had the same physiognomy, savouring of the Kalmuc, which, during the youth of that son of Catherine, had given rise to most unpleasant comments. His nose, that scarcely seemed to proceed from his forehead, positively disfigured him; his blue eyes were concealed under thick eyebrows, whose long white hairs were always in motion, and made a strange contrast to the lower portion of his very red and uncouth face. As to his character, "he is the worthy son of his father," wrote Masson, towards the close of the last century;* "he exhibits the same eccentricities

* "Memoires Secretes sur la Russie," t. i. p. 274.

the same passions, the same sternness, the same turbulence; he will never have his information, or his general ability, but he promises fair to equal, nay, even to surpass him one day in the art of setting automatons in motion." From his earliest years, Constantine had been the torment of all who were about him. Possessed of a quick wit, and petulant in spirit, he had contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of his grandmother, by amusing her with his oddities; his mother also caressed and spoiled him. He resisted all instruction, save in military exercises and manœuvres.* He conceived a disgust for the Greek language as soon as the attempt was made to acquaint him with its rudiments. Catherine had been desirous to initiate him into that tongue from his very cradle, and had placed about him a Thessalian officer, whom she had instructed to familiarize him with it; afterwards, General Kourouta, also a Greek, received the like charge. Catherine had her designs. In giving her second grandson the name of Constantine, the penetrating were enabled to catch a glimpse of them. Her aim was still more clearly shewn on the famous finger-post of Cherson, which, by her orders, bore this inscription: "The way to Constantinople." The Russian eagle, like the Austrian, has two heads; the northern Semiramis wished that the symbol should bear its ancient signification.

These ambitious dreams were short-lived, nor do they appear to have taken strong hold on the spirit of

* His tutor, on one occasion, when he urged him to read, received this reply, "I will not read; you read; and are in consequence only the greater fool."

the Grand-Duke, who was little given to ambition, and who at all times preferred vulgar amusements to grand projects. His ruling passion was for military affairs; he was exceedingly fond of disciplining the soldiery, on whom he often inflicted severities. In his attention to small details he was rigid in the extreme: the loss of a button, a moustache too long, or the want of brilliancy of a belt, or a breast-plate, excited his wrath: nothing escaped his eagle eye. During his residence at Warsaw he was continually perplexing and harassing his generals. With an imperative gesture he would arrest the march of a regiment defiling before him on parade, on account of the most trivial defect, or some irregularity, almost imperceptible.

But Constantine had real military ability. He had learned the art of war in the school of Suwarrow; and though he was only twenty years of age when he made his Italian campaign, he greatly distinguished himself. Then it was, that he received from his father in token of the imperial approbation the title of Cæsarovitch, of which he was justly proud. At the battle of Austerlitz, invested with the command of the reserve, composed of ten battalions and eighteen squadrons of the guard, he bravely withstood the furious charge of Bernadotte's corps. Surrounded by superior numbers, he made a noble resistance, in which, though the chevalier guards and the horse-guards were almost annihilated, he effected his retreat in good order. But notwithstanding his fame in arms, the veteran Field-Marshal Ramenski, refused to number

him amongst his generals, when in 1806, he took the command of the Russian troops sent to the aid of the Prussians. But that military genius, at once loyal, disinterested, and intractable, remonstrated against the presence of the emperor in his own army. Public opinion supported him; and he ventured to say to his sovereign, "If your imperial majesty joins the army, the whole court will follow you, and all will be lost." When Benningsen succeeded Ramenski, Constantine served under his command; but in doing so, he had to suppress the feelings of his heart; for Benningsen, distinguished as a soldier, was one of the murderers of his father Paul. Under this veteran the grand-duke commanded the cavalry of the guard in the Prussian campaign. If he never gained the reputation of a very skilful captain, which none of the four sons of Paul have been able to acquire, at least he proved his valour, and shewed some military abilities.

Eccentric, impetuous, passionate, even brutal, Constantine nevertheless hid some of the qualities of a noble heart under a rough exterior. Coarseness and harshness of speech are not certain and infallible proofs of absence of sensibility. Temper or affectation is frequently the source from which they flow.* He always manifested great respect for the memory of his unfortunate father; and towards his mother, he exhibited affection, deference, and submission. He adored

* The act of ferocity, imputed by Custine to the Cæsarovitch, (t. iii. p. 212), is evidently borrowed from a distant age. Such an act could not have been done in our days, even in Poland.

his brother Alexander, and was entirely devoted to him; it constituted a large portion of his happiness to second him in his designs and to be continually at his side. He accompanied him to the interview of the Niemen, in his long march from Moscow to Paris to the Congress of Vienna, to that of Aix-la-Chapelle, and in the journey which Alexander, in company with Frederick William III., made to France, in October 1818, to be present at the reviews, and at the departure of their troops, when the evacuation of France had been decided upon. The two monarchs visited Paris together to offer their personal congratulations to Louis XVIII. on the issue of the negotiations. Constantine was a cypher by the side of his imperial brother; whilst homage was offered from every quarter to the one, the other was almost overlooked; but disregarding himself, the grand-duke found his greatest pleasure in his brother's exaltation; and his deportment was always most deferential towards him. The Baron of Ompteda remarked one day to the Count Lagarde, "Look! behind the emperor's chair stands his brother, the Grand-Duke Constantine, the third person in the empire, and the presumptive heir to the throne. How servile the attitude he assumes before the czar! With what affectation he proclaims himself his first subject! Really, one might fancy him as fond of servitude as most men are of liberty."* The event proved that Constantine, while assuming this deference in public, was governed as much by principle as by

* "Fêtes et Souvenirs du Congrès de Vienne," t. i. p. 193.

attachment to his brother: the lessons of his father, an absolute man, who would not endure contradiction, had taught him a blind idolatry for the imperial dignity. He acted upon system, and upon religious principle; whilst his narrow intellect conceived that by such submission he was essentially promoting the interests of his country and the continuance of order and tranquillity. And among the grand-dukes, who by virtue of their birth may be called to the throne, this reverence for the autocratic dignity is not, in our opinion, without its advantages; for unless there be an elevated idea of the sovereignty as representing the Deity on earth; unless there be a full conviction of the sanctity of the office, and of its Divine appointment; unless, in fact, its religious character and functions be acknowledged and impressed, whence could the courage be looked for necessary to the man who is to guide the destinies of a nation of sixty millions of souls, in the absence of all public and tutelary institutions which might lessen, by sharing with him, his responsibilities?* But this notion, which may be salutary for grand-dukes, when it is spread abroad in the nation, exercises an evil influence on its development. Doubtless the idolizing of the ruler is better than the obedience of fear; but it perpetuates abuses, keeps things *in statu quo*, and makes slavery the common condition.

Another instance of the nobility of some of Con-

* "Responsibility is the curse of the absolute monarch. If all pleasures proceed from him, all pains have their abiding-place in his breast." Custine, t. i. 316.

stantine's sentiments, notwithstanding his apparent harshness, may be seen in the humanity with which he treated the sick and wounded of the French army, who fell into the power of the Russians in 1812. Officers and privates were alike the objects of his most lively solicitude; he visited them in the hospitals, sent them relief, administered words of consolation, and conferred appointments, in his palace of Thelna, in the Gulf of Finland, upon several whom he chose from amongst them.

His fervent adoration of his brother and sovereign, dictated the language of the proclamation which he addressed to the Polish army in 1815, when the military command of that small kingdom, resuscitated under the auspices of Russia, at the Congress of Vienna, was confided to him. It ran thus:

"Unlimited devotion to the emperor, who desires only the good of your country; love for his august person; obedience, discipline, and concord, are the means by which the prosperity of your country, now under his powerful protection, may be assured. By such a course of conduct, you will place yourselves in a position of happiness, which others may promise, but which he alone can secure to you. His power and his virtues are the guarantee that he will do so."

Officially, Constantine had no other title in Poland than that of generalissimo; but the civil government also was under his influence; for, though the veteran general, Joseph Zaïonczek, who had distinguished him-

self in the war of independence, and who was afterwards created a prince, was nominally placed at its head, with the title of *Namiestrick*, or lieutenant of the king, he durst not act counter to the will of the grand-duke, and virtually abandoned to him affairs purely political. Constantine had the merit of supplying the new kingdom with an excellent army; he had spared no pains to bring it into the most perfect order and discipline. He indulged anew the taste of his youth; and his mania for reviews exceeded all belief. Monsieur de Custine has recorded a speech of his, which is exquisitely characteristic. "I do not like war: it spoils soldiers; soils their accoutrements, and ruins discipline." It must be confessed, this is not the language of a hero; and nothing proves more the absence, in him, of those qualities which constitute the great warrior, the true captain, than this exclusive concern respecting the minutiæ of uniform.

The Cæsarovitch, with a certain degree of intelligence and capability, sometimes even witty, and never at a loss in familiar conversation, had, as we have said, a narrow mind, which led him to pedantic precision in trifles. He accepted an office which made him grand-master of the police of the Holy Alliance. Anxious to repress the march of mind, he exercised a strict surveillance over all strangers arriving in Poland, students or others, and over the opinions of the Poles themselves, and he covered the kingdom with spies, whose reports he minutely examined, often himself verifying their informations. Nothing was deemed

too insignificant to be worthy of his personal investigation.

Alexander loved his brother with an affection as strong as that which the latter felt for him; but he was far from approving his conduct in all things. Sometimes his friendships excited his displeasure, as for instance, his regard for General Bauer; sometimes his *brusquerie* offended him; and the passionate reproaches and insults he would at times, as at reviews, offer to military personages of exalted rank, and of the best families, formed a serious cause of annoyance to the emperor.

Whenever Constantine was thus carried away by the passion of the moment, he would bitterly repent the wrong he had done; but it was then too late; the injury had been committed, and his attempts at reparation were usually answered by the sudden withdrawal of the insulted individual from the service. Thus Alexander was kept in constant apprehension and distrust of him.

He was not bad at heart; yet, like his father, he caused all to tremble who approached him. He had a beautiful pavilion, which had been built for him, on a charming site, near the gates of Warsaw; it was called Belvedere, and had been erected by a French architect, whom he had long honoured with his friendship; it was not far from Lazienki, the favourite residence of the last king of Poland. But the generalissimo made a fortress of it; he shut himself up there whenever he was not engaged in reviews,

in visits to the barracks, or cantonments of his soldiers or in other military duties; and none approached him in his seclusion, without fear and trembling.

Of this rude and barbarous temper, Constantine was little fitted to inaugurate the new *régime* declared by the charter of Poland, at the proclamation of which, in 1815, he had presided, and which he had sworn to defend. Under such a *régime*, calmness, dignity, patience, and respect for the laws, are essential conditions; whereas, the very shadow of resistance excited the choler of the Russian viceroy. He became the main agent in betraying his brother's government into an unconstitutional course. The periodical press was very soon trammelled with restrictions; a severe censorship was instituted; young men were forbidden to visit foreign universities; those of Warsaw and Wilna were subjected to a humiliating surveillance; all kinds of associations were prohibited under the severest penalties; inquiries were set on foot respecting some supposed to exist secretly; the national feeling was repeatedly outraged; and the liberal promises, formerly made by Alexander, were despised and trodden under foot. The rule of Constantine became an insufferable tyranny, which was still further aggravated by the support lent him by the inquisitor, Novociltsoff, who was curator of the university of Wilna, and chief commissary, special, in the kingdom of Poland.*

The viceroy suffered him to have his full swing;

* Nicholas Novociltsoff was afterwards created a count, and became also president of the council of the empire, an office which he exercised until his death in 1838.

and Novociltsoff, being charged with the duty of infusing into the minds of the youth principles in conformity with the views of the Holy Alliance, extended his control over every thing, and became even more an object of fear than the grand-duke himself.

The material prosperity of the kingdom, the advance of industry, agriculture, and commerce, the embellishment of the towns, and especially of Warsaw, ill compensated for the cruel mortifications put upon a people, still proud though conquered. The Poles murmured, and resisted whenever resistance was possible without open revolt. Constantine taxed them with ingratitude. The charge was unjust, for in that people the spirit of nationality is stronger than every other; but he only saw external and physical prosperity which was in part his own work, and of which he was as proud as of his fine army of 40,000 men, whom he had so formed and disciplined that they might have withstood the best troops in Europe.

Self-love, and the consciousness of having effected some good, identified the prince more and more with Poland; he soon gave her a higher place in his affections than Russia, where he found nothing to admire so much as that which he had habitually under his own eyes; and it would have been with difficulty that he would have been persuaded to change his abode at Warsaw for a residence in St. Petersburg, even during the life of the brother whom he idolized.

Such was the man to whom, after the death of

Alexander, the crown of the czars would in all probability devolve. Assuredly he was not popular; and yet he was the only one of the grand-dukes with whom the public was much occupied. But eighteen months younger than Alexander, he had been conspicuously prominent during his whole reign, whilst the other grand-dukes, one seventeen, and the other nineteen years younger than the emperor, had been little brought into notice. He was not beloved; but the people were willing to accept him; resigning themselves to an evil which could not be avoided.

When during the indisposition of Alexander in 1824, the inhabitants of St. Petersburg saw the Cæsarovitch suddenly appear amongst them, the fear they experienced and shewed, augured the terror with which they looked forward to his accession, and nothing could equal the joy of all classes on the temporary recovery of their beloved sovereign.

During the last illness of Alexander, bulletins of his health were sent direct to the Grand-Duke Constantine at Warsaw, with as much care and exactitude as those to the empress-mother at St. Petersburg, and he received the first information of the event which threw the empire into mourning. These communications certainly might have been made to the affectionate brother as well as to the future heir, and circumstances imperiously demanded that he should be kept in full information of all that took place; the tranquillity of the empire depended upon it. Yet the couriers so constantly despatched from Taganrog to Warsaw might

well seem to confirm the general belief with regard to the succession.

The public were in possession of a fact, which, whilst it did not affect his personal rights, must exclude his heirs, if he should have any, from the imperial crown. We must circumstantially detail this part of his private history, as it is much mixed up with after events.

Catherine, acting on the same principle which impelled her in the case of Alexander, had married her grand-son Constantine whilst he was yet too young to sustain the conjugal relation. In the year of her death, 1796, she had caused him to espouse the princess Julienne of Saxe Coburg, sister of Leopold I., the present king of the Belgians. The princess was not quite fifteen years of age. Julienne, who on her marriage received the name of Anne Foedorovna, never gained the affections of her eccentric husband; no children resulted from the marriage, which was by no means happy; and the young pair separated by mutual consent at the expiration of four years. The grand-duchess returned to Germany in the enjoyment of a pension, which enabled her to live suitably to her rank. After the lapse of some years overtures were again made to her; she did not however choose to accept them, but preserved her condition. Excepting the title she still retained, she had now no connection with Russia. Constantine found consolation in her absence in the indulgence of ties unconsecrated by marriage, and sometimes formed with unworthy

objects; but an acquaintance which he made in 1820 with Jeanne Gudzinska, daughter of a count at Vistoslaff, in the province of Bromberg, wrought a change in him; the idea of a second marriage seriously entered his mind, and led in the end to his divorce from his first wife. The young Polish lady, gifted with rich endowments of mind and heart, exercised a magical influence upon this singular man, who, despite the roughness of his manner, and even of his nature, possessed true sensibility, and was capable of really romantic attachment. Jeanne was fragile and delicate; Constantine was the very personification of strength, and when he lost his self-control, his person and aspect were those of a savage. But these contrasts did not deter from sympathy; the heart of man is the seat of profound mysteries; the society of the beautiful Pole became necessary to the Cæsarovitch; he could not live without her, and before long the wish nearest his heart was to unite himself to her by an indissoluble tie.

The laws of the Greek church are in general rigid with regard to divorce; and it is very unusual for the church to permit a second marriage of either of the divorced parties during the life of the other: the dissolution of marriage is seldom granted, save with the infliction of a penance on one of the pair, who is perhaps condemned to pass the rest of life in a convent; but in ecclesiastical matters, as in all others, the will of the autocrat allows of no opposition; neither the Holy Synod, nor the other orders of the state,

resisted the grand-duke, who by virtue of an imperial ukase, dated 1st April, 1820, had his first marriage declared null, and himself in a position to contract a second.

Thus authorized, he solemnly, though as it is called with the left hand, married Jeanne Gudzinska. The marriage took place on the 5th of June, and on the 16th of August following, the emperor conferred upon her the title of Princess of Lowictz; a title which was to descend to her heirs, derived from an estate he granted to his brother.

At the period of the divorce, the act touching the succession, which has been already mentioned, was drawn up by the emperor, and acceded to by Constantine, who, impelled by the vehemence of his love, was ready to assent to any thing in order to gratify it. He had dreamed of happiness; he saw himself compelled to purchase it at the price of a throne, nor did he deem the cost too great. He found his recompense in the happiness of domestic life. Entire harmony and strong affection marked the whole period of this union, so honourable to himself and flattering to Poland. The ascendancy which the princess, by her native grace and dignity of character, ever exercised over her husband, had often the most beneficial effect in softening his roughness and restraining his rage. Towards herself he never dropped the tenderness of the lover, but became daily more and more attached to her, and more worthy to conciliate her regard.*

* The Princess Lowitcz died at St. Petersburg, on the 29th of No-

The children of this marriage, had there been any, would not have been born Grand-Dukes of Russia, nor would they have been entitled to ascend the throne; hence it was highly probable that one day the crown would alight on the head of the Grand-Duke Nicholas, second brother of Alexander, but only after the demise of Constantine, whose personal right subsisted in full force. He alone could be regarded as presumptive heir to the vast monarchy of which he had been always the zealous servant.

Contradictory rumours were, however, circulated in foreign diplomatic circles. An almanac, published in 1825, in the month of September or October, in the town of Frankfort on the Oder, and under the control of the Prussian censorship, ventured to call the Grand-Duke Nicholas the heir to the throne. Persons who about that time had occasion to approach the grand-duchess, his wife, formerly Princess Charlotte of Prussia, declared that a certain assumption of haughtiness indicated that she was not unaware of her husband's prospects. It was averred, that she shewed this even to Elizabeth, the actual empress, who at that time was thrown into the shade. However, the Prus-

vember, 1831, a few months after her husband. The woman who could soften, and almost transform, a character so ferocious and imperious as that of Constantine, must have been herself truly amiable. There was nothing he would not do to gratify his wife. Her health was delicate, and he accompanied her every year to Carlsbad, or to Ems. Under her influence, he learned self-control, and became a welcome guest even at the court of the stiff and formal Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony. Constantine often went to Dresden, and the worthy king received him with cordiality.

sian police caused the statement of the almanac to be suppressed, on account of the excitement it had created.

A mystery hung over the matter. In Russia there was the more indifference upon the subject, because none of the three grand-dukes were beloved. Elsewhere in Europe uncertainty was painfully felt, and would not be long endured. It is the aim of an absolute government to engender in the minds of its subjects a strong belief in fatalism; by preserving profound silence, even on those points on which their wishes would most seek for information, it discourages curiosity; and if it obtains the blind confidence in itself which it claims, it turns the submission of its subjects to account, by justifying itself, be events and results what they may.

On the present occasion, the uncertainty which everywhere existed respecting the succession, might aid the authors of the criminal conspiracy, and entail the most terrible consequences, by causing torrents of blood to flow, and delivering the intelligent portion of the community to the tender mercies of an infatuated soldiery, or an enraged populace, who would be the more desperate from their enmity to the wealthy classes, especially when, as in St. Petersburg, those classes are much increased in number by foreigners.

Providence, however, graciously watched over the empire, and preserved it from such extremities, by choosing that sovereign who could best meet the re-

quirements of the state, then in circumstances so critical.

We will not anticipate events. The news of the death of Alexander had not yet reached the capital, which was tolerably tranquil, being merely disturbed by reports, from time to time, of numerous individual crimes, such as murders, and various outrages. At that time of the year, when darkness veils the earth from four of the afternoon until nine in the morning, crime is frequent, and the ordinary police were at that period as inadequate to allay alarm and impress a sense of security upon the agitated citizens as the strong political police were inadequate to the detection and suppression of a plot known to some thousands of persons.*

We have mentioned that on the 29th November, the Empress Elizabeth, hoping that her husband might yet recover, communicated the happy prospect to the imperial family without delay. Her letter, confirmed in its tidings by a second from Prince Volkonski, arrived on the 8th December, following one which had been written on the 28th November by Sir James Wylie, which contained a desponding statement of the case. The agreement between the letters of the empress and the prince, written consecutively, gave rise to strong hopes. An evident amendment after such a day of pain as the preceding one, described by Sir James Wylie, seemed a pledge that it was not the Divine will yet to remove their adored monarch from his devoted people. Grati-

* See on this subject, Note (17,) in the Appendix.

tude to God called together the whole court on the morning of the 9th, in the chapel of the winter palace, where they offered up thanks to the Almighty for having saved the father of his country. The sanctuary was still resounding with hymns of exultation and gratitude, when the news of Alexander's death came to change their joy into grief. At seven o'clock a messenger, bearing the fatal tidings, arrived in the metropolis, having travelled 475 leagues in eight days. The despatch was conveyed to Nicholas Paulovitch, the only one of the grand-dukes then in St. Petersburg. Michael Paulovitch had left a few days before for Warsaw. Advancing towards the archimandrid with an air of profound affliction, Nicholas requested him to stop the chaunting, and imparted to him the mournful news, which he desired him to communicate to the unhappy mother of the deceased, he himself not having the heart to fulfil that cruel duty. The priest obeyed; he took the crucifix in his hands, covered it with crape, and walked with a solemn pace towards the empress. "Man must bend to the decrees of God," said he, in an impressive tone. Marie understood him; despair succeeded to joy in her soul, and she fell senseless into the arms of one of her ladies. Some moments were granted to the feelings of nature; but imperious cares demanded calm self-possession. It is not permitted to exalted personages to abandon themselves to the feelings of the heart, and to mourn like ordinary mortals, even while they are suffering under the deepest sorrow. The security of the empire was to be

provided for; there was not an instant to lose; delay might be dangerous. The state had already been eight days without a monarch.

A short consultation took place between the grand-duke and his mother. What passed between them, none knew. How it was that she—the object of the profound respect of all her children—did not at that moment enforce a decision, long since agreed upon between herself, Alexander, and Constantine, is a secret which none can tell. After the interview, however, Nicholas proceeded to the senate to take the oath of fidelity to his brother Constantine, as "the legitimate heir to the empire by right of primogeniture," and to issue a command to the whole empire to follow his example. But a serious difficulty presented itself. The assembled council of the empire deemed it to be its first duty to examine the contents of a packet, sealed with the imperial seal, and committed to its charge. On this precious deposit was written, in Alexander's hand, "to be kept by the council of the empire until I order otherwise. In the event of my death, this packet to be opened at an extraordinary sitting, before proceeding to any other business." The president of the council, Prince Peter Vassilievitch Lapoukin, broke the seal, and found enclosed a manifesto, signed by Alexander, and dated at Sarskoë-Selo, the 16th (28th) August, 1823, together with two other deeds, dated eighteen months earlier. The former of these was a letter from Constantine to the Emperor Alexander, dated St. Petersburg, the 14th (26th)

January, 1822. We give it literally, underlining some words which more particularly claim attention.

"Sire, encouraged by the constant proofs of your Imperial Majesty's infinite goodness towards me, I presume once more to trespass upon it, and to lay at your feet, sire, a very humble prayer.

"Conscious that I do not possess either the genius, the talents, or the strength necessary to fit me for the dignity of sovereign, to which my birth would give me a right, I intreat your imperial majesty to transfer that right to him to whom it belongs after me, and thus ensure for ever the stability of the empire. As to myself, I shall add by this *renunciation, a new guarantee and a new force to the engagement which I spontaneously and solemnly contracted on the occasion of my divorce from my first wife.* All the circumstances in which I find myself, strengthen my determination to adhere to this resolution, which will prove to the empire, and to the whole world, the sincerity of my sentiments.

"Deign, sire, to secure the accomplishment of my prayer: deign to persuade our august mother to consent to it, and give it your imperial sanction.

"In a private sphere I will endeavour, upon all occasions, to serve as an example to your faithful subjects, and to all who are animated by the love of our dear country.

"I am, with profound respect, sire," &c.

The second enclosure was a letter from Alexander, in answer to that of Constantine; a simple acceptance

of his resignation. It was dated the 2nd (14th) February, 1822. We shall allude to it hereafter. The third was an act of Alexander in accordance with these two letters.—The following is the substance of that manifesto: we have already given the date.

"I. The spontaneous act by which our younger brother, the Cæsarovitch and Grand-Duke Constantine, renounces his right to the throne of all the Russias, is and remains fixed and irrevocable. The said act of renunciation will be preserved in the great cathedral of the assumption, at Moscow, and in the three high administrations of our empire; the Holy Synod, the Council of the Empire, and the Directing Senate, in order to ensure its safety and publicity.

"II. In consequence of this arrangement and in conformity with the strict tenor of the act of succession to the throne, we acknowledge our second brother, the Grand-Duke Nicholas, as our heir."

The conclusion of this act, although without political interest, is worthy of being recorded.

"As to ourselves," wrote Alexander, "we beg of all our faithful subjects, that with the same sentiments of love which have ever caused us to consider the care of their constant prosperity as our first concern on earth, they will address fervent prayers to our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that he may deign in his divine mercy to receive our soul into his eternal kingdom."

These documents were decisive; from the moment Alexander breathed his last sigh, the throne belonged

of right to Nicholas. Was that prince ignorant of the fact? Had he received no intimation of the contents of the deposit confided to the council of the empire, as well as to two other high estates, and to the sacred cathedral of Moscow? Were we to judge from the first lines of his manifesto on his accession, we might be led to suppose so; but it appears highly improbable that such was the truth. We attach no importance to the report circulated with respect to his marriage with the daughter of the King of Prussia, whose father, it was said, would not have given her to a grand-duke of Russia who had not the prospect of being called to the throne. At the time of the marriage in question, (1st July, 1817,) Constantine was not divorced from his first wife, and the free life which he led at the period, would scarcely have given rise to predictions that he would marry again; but as he had no children by his first marriage, Nicholas was placed very near the throne; and this consideration was important. All men will agree that the heir to a crown, or the heir-presumptive to it, ought to be prepared for his august destiny. We can scarcely conceive that Alexander would have been so wanting to his duty, as to leave his young brother in ignorance of the arrangement; but even if this fault be imputed to him, as also that of allowing the empire to remain in a state of cruel darkness on the subject, the empress, aware of all, had doubtless lifted from before the eyes of Nicholas the veil which hid these secrets.

The grand-duke, we are convinced, had a full know-

ledge of the real state of the case, when he proclaimed his brother Constantine Emperor of all the Russias: we are convinced that the council of the empire, after reading the contents of the deposit, had nothing new to impart to him. That high court, in the first instance, fulfilled exactly the duty imposed upon it: it invited the young prince to its sitting; but he replied, that not being a member of the Assembly he was not qualified to appear there; that at any time it might have any important communication to make to him, he would be happy to receive it at his winter palace, which he had occupied some days. The council repaired thither; laid before him the deeds forming the will of the departed sovereign; declared him emperor; and prepared to pay him homage, according to the words of the manifesto.

"We entertain the fond hope, that on the day when it shall please the King of kings to call us according to the lot of humanity from our temporary reign into eternity, the high administrations of the empire,—to whom our present and irrevocable will, as also our legal dispositions, will be communicated in due time and according to our orders,—will hasten to take their oath of fidelity to the hereditary emperor whom we have named."

The council acted very properly; but Nicholas would not allow it to proceed. "I am not emperor," he said, "and wish not to become so to the detriment of my elder brother. If, maintaining his renunciation, the Grand-Duke Constantine persists in

making this sacrifice of his rights, then, and then only, I will exercise mine, by an acceptance of the throne."

The council, usually so timidly acquiescent, would not now yield: it discovered on this solemn occasion the power of opposition: it urged every objection suggested by the danger to which his refusal would subject the country, which would thus be exposed to a strife of doubtful issue.

In an autocratic state it may be truly said, an interregnum is a revolution; the people accustomed to think, feel, and act, only through the sovereign, are confounded and alarmed when the sovereign happens to fail them; in suspense as to their fate, they bethink themselves of doing what is forbidden in ordinary circumstances; namely, of intermeddling with politics, and occupying themselves with their own interests: instead of obeying, they deliberate; and to what may not these deliberations lead? It is impossible to foresee. If there be more than one claimant to the vacant throne, it is natural to ask, who will win the day? and this question leads to another, which is the more worthy? But to tolerate such queries would be the overthrow of all existing law. So reasoned the council. It was impossible to dispute the justice of these arguments. Nevertheless the grand-duke remained immoveable; he pointed out that the renunciation not having been proclaimed during the preceding reign was invalid; that Constantine was consequently emperor, and that it might not please him

now to give his sanction to an act which without it was null and void. His decision must then be awaited, and all must be done in the meantime, as if the resignation had not been made. He insisted that, following his example, the members of the council should swear allegiance to the nearest heir to the throne. He would listen to no remonstrance. The scruples of the members of the council were not removed; but they were silenced. In order to extricate themselves from their embarrassing position they at length addressed him.

"You are our emperor: we owe you absolute obedience; if you order us to recognize the Grand-Duke Constantine as our legitimate sovereign it only remains for us to conform to your commands."

Strange reasoning! Sad and humiliating effect of that passive obedience which is always prepared to bend to the absolute will of the monarch, in defiance even of fundamental principle or established law, intended to limit his power! The senate allowed itself to be swayed by the example of the council of the empire, and taking no heed of the deposit of which it also was the guardian, it recognized and proclaimed the eldest of Alexander's brothers emperor. The holy synod offered no opposition. Such being the conduct of the highest bodies of the empire, the almost stupid indifference with which the lower classes followed in their wake, is little astonishing. The oath was immediately enforced in Constantine's name, though at that moment the death of Alexander had scarcely been made known to the public. So great was the haste

employed, that the usual proclamation of such an event was dispensed with.

On the morning of the 9th, the regiments of the guards were assembled in the square before the winter palace: the squadrons bearing their colours were marched to the imperial chapel, where the ceremony of taking the oath was performed. The colours which had been taken away were then restored to the soldiers in the name of their new sovereign.

When the regiments left their barracks, headed by their commanders, many of them imagined that they were going once more to swear fealty to the Emperor Alexander; why this renewed act was required, they believed their officers to be the best judges: it was something strange, but they were accustomed to obey.

Despite their habit of obedience, however, some battalions are said to have hesitated, when, instead of Alexander, the name of Constantine was heard; in others, when the soldiers were ordered to swear fidelity to their "new master," a few of the subalterns cried, "Who is our new master?"—"The Cæsarovitch Constantine," was the reply. He was better known, and notwithstanding his rude manners, less unpopular amongst them, than the other grand-dukes, although none of the three brothers were beloved. The reply appeased the soldiers. "Glory to God," was echoed along the ranks, as the men devoutly made the sign of the cross.

At that date Nicholas was no favourite. His severity in the army, exercised on small occasions, his frequent

inspections of the barracks and guard-houses at night time, when a visit was a surprise, had alienated many hearts from him. It has been asserted that his knowledge of the disposition of the army towards him had much to do with his conduct on this occasion; that he imagined Constantine would repent of having rejected one of the first crowns in the world; and that in the event of a conflict, it would not be to him that the preference would be accorded. His inexperience, it is said, he calculated would further diminish his chance of success. Others have asserted, that, aware as he doubtless was of the plot to which Alexander had been in danger of falling the first victim, Nicholas durst not assume his rights with the risk of finding at so critical a moment an enemy in his own brother. These various suppositions have been refuted by the character since displayed by the czar; and we see no reason to doubt the explanation he has himself given of his conduct.

"We had not," he declared in the manifesto on his accession, "the wish or the right to consider as irrevocable, a renunciation which, although made, was never proclaimed or passed into a law. We wished to shew our respect for the fundamental regulations of our country respecting the order of succession to the throne:" and further on, "our object was to guard against any infringement of that law which establishes the order of succession, to manifest the loyalty of our intentions, and to save our beloved country from even a moment's uncertainty as to the

person of her legitimate sovereign. This determination, taken in the purity of our conscience before God, who sees into the most secret recesses of the heart, was blessed by our beloved mother the Empress Marie."

Why should we doubt the sincerity of this magnanimous language, which formed an admirable inauguration of a new reign, and a remarkable contrast to that of the members of the council of the empire, as also to that employed by Constantine, especially in a letter to his brother, which savours of the abject submission and cringing humility of spirit which exists under an eastern despotism? In that letter he wrote:

"The supreme law of the empire—the sacred law which, ensuring the stability of our institutions, constitutes a blessing given us by heaven—is the will of the sovereign who is placed over us by Providence. In carrying out this law, your Imperial Majesty has fulfilled the purpose of the King of kings, who, in affairs of real importance, evidently inspires the monarchs of this earth."*

Nichclas was indeed the legitimate sovereign, and as such, the chosen of Providence; but he was not such by virtue of the will of Alexander, or of any testament executed by him. The times were passed when the sovereigns of Russia held the right of choosing their own successors,—he was sovereign by virtue of the fundamental law of succession, restored by Paul,

* The same adoration for absolutism, the same absence of all notion of the sound principle of established law, is to be recognised in the reply made by the Cæsarovitch to the first report addressed to him by the ministers of justice. See Lesur. "Annuaire, pour 1825," App. p. 75.

which alone regulated the case. Constantine had incontestably the prior right; but he had for ever forfeited his claim by signing the act of renunciation, and from that moment the title of Nicholas was established. Alexander had no power to touch the case, unless, indeed, by re-opening the whole question of the succession and changing the law. By the subsisting law, he had no right to interfere, further than by publishing the renunciation and proclaiming his second brother. Such were the existing principles; and it is to the honour of Nicholas, that he recognized principles under an absolute monarchy, where the will of the sovereign is accustomed to make and unmake law. But these recognized principles could not be followed out rigidly to the letter: the sacred idea of the authority of law, often sincerely invoked by Nicholas, is, in the actual condition of Russia, unhappily an illusion. Alexander never desired to alter the law of succession; on the contrary, he appealed to it in his will. Accordingly, it was in full force and the only source of legitimate title to the throne at the moment of his death.

In a political point of view, the conduct of Nicholas was perhaps faulty. By prolonging uncertainty and necessitating a regency, it might open the flood-gates of revolution at the foot of the throne. But if he had adopted a different line of conduct, a very bright, beautiful, and majestic page would have been wanting to Russian history; mankind would not have been edified by a spectacle of the most unbounded generosity exer-

cised in a case where the law of right had never been firmly established;—of the truest nobility and delicacy of mind existing in two sons of Paul I., who, though indeed brothers of the polished Alexander, had been regarded by public opinion as princes characterized chiefly by the roughness and coarse defects of the soldier. Nicholas had the honour of taking the initiative in the conflict of generosity; Constantine responded to it by conduct no less noble and delicate. Each possessed the rare quality of self-abnegation; each refused the sovereign power which was spontaneously offered to him. The younger grounded his refusal on the legitimate rights of his brother; the elder to remain faithful to his word; and he carried his self-renouncing devotion so far as to account himself happy in the act, and to aid with his own hand in fixing firmly on the brow of Nicholas that crown which he might have himself worn, and then to bow humbly before him as an ordinary subject, proud to set an example of submission.

This last trait—the greatness of soul which led Constantine to consummate his work by this exhibition of hearty sincerity and good will—has stamped the episode with a seal which must extort the admiration of posterity.

But how are we to explain the original renunciation of Constantine? How can we suppose that the natural heir to the throne would have voluntarily determined to relinquish it, following, to use the phrase in the manifesto, "his spontaneous will?"

In the first place, the words must not be taken in their literal sense; for they were opposed to other passages in the same manifesto, or in the writings connected with it. When in his letter of the 20th of January, 1822, the Grand-Duke Constantine said of himself, with an extravagant humility,

"Not recognizing in myself the genius, talents, or strength necessary to qualify me for the sovereign dignity;" that was evidently not his true reason; and assuredly it was not to that assertion that the emperor replied when he wrote,—

"I find in your letter nothing to surprise me; it furnishes only a new proof of your sincere attachment to the state, and of your solicitude for its undisturbed repose."

It may perhaps be permitted to us to marvel that the emperor passed over in silence the extreme modesty of his brother's words, that he did not most carefully avoid allowing the inference, that he conceived that want of "genius, talents, and strength" in the grand-duke might compromise the repose of the empire.

An attentive reader of the documents will be impressed with the conviction that reasons of state exacted this renunciation of Constantine, which was regarded as a political necessity. Alexander and his mother were fully agreed upon this point. "In giving," to use the words of the manifesto, "added authority to the act of 1820 on the succession to the throne," an act voluntarily and solemnly recognized on his part; the Cæsarovitch made a sacrifice—free, truly, for it was

not imposed upon him by force; but one which we cannot but believe necessary to the establishment of the hereditary statutes of the imperial house, and to the undisturbed tranquillity of the empire of all the Russias." These words were deliberately set down, and they were confirmed by the language of the grand-duke himself. The two brothers had come to an amicable agreement, under the auspices of a mother venerated by both; whose intervention, solicited by one of her sons, and received by the other as a most important event, calls to mind those patriarchal manners, when no authority claimed a deeper respect than the parental.

But whence arose this necessity? and how was it connected with the law of succession? Doubtless, the fantastic character of the natural heir to the throne was one of its chief causes: it was an idea hardly to be borne, that Russia should be exposed to a repetition of the reign of Paul. Constantine's marriage with the princess Lowitcz, formed the pretext which was wanted. Two years had passed since the marriage was contracted. Constantine had voluntarily and solemnly recognised the act of 1820, by virtue of which his children, should his union produce any, were excluded from the throne legally. That was all which could be exacted from him; yet, in fact, more was demanded. In consenting to the divorce and second marriage of Constantine, are we to believe that the holy synod attached conditions? We can scarcely suppose so; for, in Russia, Religion herself speaks a deferential language in presence of the Czar; but,

assuredly, that union presented difficulties against which the emperor was bound to provide.

The princess Lowitcz, notwithstanding her marriage, was still a Catholic, whilst the wife of the czar could not legally profess any but *the true orthodox faith.*

Placed, although subordinately, on one side of the throne, the wife of Constantine, even if she had wished to accept such a position, still must have wounded the prejudices of a sensitive people, and in a manner outraged an article of their faith.

She must either have lived at court, in entire obscurity and oblivion, or, appearing at all, must have taken rank after the grand-duchesses. This inferiority could not but wound the pride of her husband, whose susceptibility would be quickened by his strong affection. Was it to be supposed that he would long endure it? Again, her position, mortifying though it would have been, would have placed a Pole and a subject above all the women of Russia, above the most illustrious princesses sprung from the blood of Rurik or of Ghedemin. Would the Muscovite pride have suffered this? Would even her virtues have obliterated Russian recollection, the remembrance of Marina Mniszech, and the odious domination of the Siekhs? It is true, that Russia had once possessed a czarina of the same nation, the first wife of Foeodor Alexeiovitch; but Agatha Semenovno Grudszecki had conformed to the national religion, besides which, at that date, the wife of the czar was usually chosen from amongst

noble ladies of the country, and had little influence over affairs.

Jeanne Grudzinska was a woman of spirit and of cultivated mind, attached to her country and to her religion. It was to be apprehended, that she would claim further privileges for Poland, whilst the Russians held that the vassal kingdom already enjoyed too many, and were exceedingly jealous because it possessed some rights not extended to themselves. Another embarrassment was found in the fact, that though, from the defect of her birth, she was incompetent to sit on the throne of Rurik and of Vladimir Monomachus, she was not excluded from that of the Piasts. Her blood was as good as that of many former queens of her nation; private gentlemen had been seen sometimes to ascend that elective throne; and, when raised to that elevation, the king ceased not to be *primus inter pares*. The two crowns had, indeed, been declared indissoluble on the head of the princes of the house of Holstein-Romanoff; but the sovereign, without violating the laws of Russia, might use the latitude accorded to him, in the vassal kingdom, in the choice of his queen; and thus gratify private affection, or desire of popularity, with the people.

It would appear that Alexander and his mother were swayed by these grave considerations, when they obtained from Constantine more than could be exacted by the existing law. Whether, however, these formed their real motives, or were only put forward as pretexts, they determined to offer him the alternative

of renunciation of the throne, as the condition of his second marriage. It is not improbable that Constantine was little inclined to ascend it. He, who bore so very striking a resemblance to his father, could not forget the bloody catastrophe which had terminated his days. More than this, under the influence of love, he, like all the happy, troubled himself but little with thoughts of the future. His strong attachment to Poland caused him to regard it as his adopted country; since his Polish marriage, his ties to Russia had been weakened; and it was easy to him to renounce the land of his birth, provided only that Poland remained to him.

Under these circumstances, and with these feelings, he did all that was required from him, and did it with a good grace.

The first result of the family consultations had been a verbal arrangement; subsequently to which, Constantine subscribed an act, afterwards to be published; to this promise, once given, he remained faithful. Such is our explanation of the seeming mystery of his conduct.

The verbal arrangement is inferred from his subsequent address to the emperor, wherein he says,

"I shall add by this renunciation, a new guarantee and a new force to the engagement which I spontaneously and solemnly contracted, on the occasion of my divorce from my first wife." This passage may serve as a comment upon another:

"I consider it my duty to waive my right to the

succession, conformably with the regulations of the act of the empire, on the order of succession in the imperial family." That act could not impose upon him the obligation of which he speaks, and the word *conformably* could only relate to the cession made to the second brother; the *duty*, therefore, originated in another cause, and this cause was the verbal agreement of which we have spoken.

Constantine voluntarily submitted to all its consequences; he freely signed the deed of renunciation, an official act without which the family arrangement could not have had legal effect. His deed discovers all the characteristics of spontaneous will; no trace of constraint is discoverable. His renunciation was based with extreme modesty upon grounds of incapacity, which no person would have been justified in attributing to him: but he indicated yet another cause for his conduct, more weighty with himself perhaps, though not of a nature to be dwelt upon in a state-paper; we allude to his domestic happiness. He had lately acquired a taste for domestic life; the constraint of a court had been always odious to him; nor could he endure the annoyance of perpetually transacting civil and political affairs. After having communicated to the emperor a repetition of his abdication, he continued:—

"All the circumstances of my present condition combine to strengthen my resolution to adhere to my former renunciation; which will prove to Europe and to the world the former sincerity of my sentiments."

The Princess Lowitcz exercised an irresistible influence over Constantine's existence: for her he sacrificed one of the most brilliant crowns of the world, and far from ever regretting the act, it is stated on authority, that, just before death cut short his days, he was entertaining an idea of carrying his devotion still further, and so soon as he should have accomplished his forty years' service, of retiring into private life, fixing his residence at Frankfort-on-the-Maine.

But the field of conjecture is unlimited, and hidden motives are known only to God, who, in scripture phraseology, "searches the hearts and the reins." Let us return to facts, to the noble conduct of Nicholas, and to the homage which, following his example, was rendered by the whole empire to the Cæsarovitch, under the title of Constantine I.

Nothing was wanting to the inauguration of the new reign but some expression of will or an act on the part of the new sovereign. The whole empire swore fidelity to him.* The president of the council of the empire, and the president of the senate, who was also minister of justice, transmitted to Constantine the official report of his proclamation and of the oath taken by those bodies; his name was placed at the head of all official documents, judgments, brevets, passports, &c. Though

* The ukase of the senate prescribed, that the authorities throughout the empire should cause all the male subjects of the emperor, whatever their rank or degree, the serfs not excepted, to take their oath of allegiance. All freemen repaired in consequence to their respective churches to swear fealty. The church in Russia is a political instrument, as well as a means of making public that which it imports the government that the people should know.

nothing important was done; all the ministries were active; not less so were the various embassies or legations. Profound calm reigned throughout the metropolis; all was silent there; no communication was made to the public. The journals were mute; nothing was seen in them touching the country, save expressions of grief for the death of Alexander, and bulletins published touching the health of the empress-mother, who had been much shocked and agitated by the death of a son whom she so tenderly loved: bulletins were also issued as to the state of the Empress Elizabeth, whose strength, to the wonder of all, sustained the blow she had received.

In order to give some idea of the disposition of mind which prevailed in St. Petersburg during the interregnum, we will insert here some pages from a journal of travels, written by ourselves upon the spot on the 11th December, two days after the proclamation of Constantine I.

"Melancholy is universal here: on all sides accents of grief and sorrow are heard. Rich and poor alike mourn in Alexander the loss of the most amiable of sovereigns, and recall with affection his many beneficent deeds and noble traits."

"The journals of St. Petersburg, usually so little occupied with news of the interior, are filled with expressions of regret. Every soul is filled with mourning for the sad event. 'L'Abeille du Nord,' the most popular of the Russian journals, speaks of it with deep emotion. Many of the professors of the uni-

versities have eloquently rendered a tribute to the memory of their adored monarch; whilst the sobs and tears of their audiences, with difficulty restrained, have been the surest proof that the words to which they listened were not mere official declamations, but that the public sympathy responded to the language of the speaker. To-day, (Sunday,) all the churches, foreign as well as national, of the metropolis, have borne testimony to the general feeling; they have been besieged as at a period of national calamity. From the pulpits resounded affectionate tributes to the memory of the departed monarch, whose public and private virtues formed the theme of many a discourse, whilst the emotion of the preacher was communicated to crowded assemblies. It has pleased the Almighty to take from us a good man, a beloved father, an adored sovereign. Russia has lost her benefactor and her pride," such is the language held. "Present, myself, at the Lutheran Church of St. Peter, I was a witness of the universal affliction; I saw the tears and heard the sobs of the whole audience; an innumerable crowd was assembled in the church. Going from thence to make some visits, I found several persons who had been ill for two days, that is, since the arrival of the fatal news. The gout had attacked one, another was suffering from violent head-ache, all were sad and downcast. Mournful silence prevailed in the streets, which, moreover, were enveloped in a thick mist,—Nature herself seemed to sympathize with the general sorrow, and every glance around indicated

that the people suffered under some great common calamity."

"But, simultaneously with this profound emotion, this most sincere grief, ambition and interest are already at work; selfish motives are mingled with the affliction; places and services are lost to some! hopes are crushed for others! and combinations have fallen to the ground! The 24th of the coming March has been eagerly anticipated; it would have been the anniversary of the coronation of the emperor, when he would have reigned twenty-five years. A brilliant *fête* was to have been given on that day to commemorate a general promotion long impatiently awaited by persons belonging to the ninth and sixth classes of the Tchinn, who would have been chiefly benefited by it, and who in consequence of the ukase of the 6th (18th) of August, 1809, cannot receive it by seniority, but only at the will of the sovereign, or after having undergone an examination.* It was an advent of fortune anxiously expected by many mediocre persons, who, incapable of advancing themselves, and deficient in merit or qualification, could only look for rise, decorations, or increase of salary, on grand occasions of rare occurrence. On that day lands mortgaged to the crown were to have been freely restored; estates were to have been given away; and the imperial munificence was in other respects to have been largely exer-

* A formality which is merely a blind. A thousand examples might be cited of professors of the universities selling degrees. The death of Alexander postponed the general promotion; but it took place on the occasion of the coronation of Nicholas.

cised. Some there were, who, on account of long and faithful services, honestly merited reward, which had long been promised; and they had awaited their time for its accomplishment; but their claims were known alone to the sovereign, and that knowledge was buried in the grave with him. The new czar would have his own friends and servants to attach and provide for. Moreover, princes attend to present claims upon them, and are apt to have memories not to be depended on. 'What signifies the past,' say they; 'when the present brings its cares and embarrassments, and needs devoted agents!'

"To the great astonishment of the public, Constantine has, notwithstanding his formal renunciation, been proclaimed emperor of all the Russias. However, his present will is not known as yet. A courier has been dispatched to Warsaw to inform him that the oath of fidelity has been sworn to him by all the functionaries and servants of government, by the army, and by the entire body of the people, who were assembled for that purpose in the churches, where all who could write were required to sign their names to the formula used on such an occasion, whilst the masses who could not write were called upon to hold up their hands in token of assent; however, the general dependence upon the sincerity of the cæsarovitch is too strong to allow of any other belief than that he will hold to his resolution. Accordingly it is feared that everything will have to be done afresh. The present state of things is regarded as merely temporary. The empire has been eight days without a sovereign, and none yet

know whether the present is the true one. Meanwhile, business is not suspended; a regency has been established, and perfect tranquillity prevails. Perhaps the nation would be less tranquil and the part it would act less passive, had not the depth of the public grief absorbed all thoughts. It is remarkable that at such a conjuncture not the least disorder should be produced, not the slightest infraction of the laws should have obliged the magistracy to restrain the people, who, like a flock of sheep, patiently wait until their fate be decided.* To look on and observe the universal apathy, as to the matter of the succession, one would not imagine that it concerned the people at all. Communications are always very sparingly made to the public; and the contemptuous silence preserved towards it would seem to indicate that the only part expected from it is ready and unquestioning obedience when commands are issued.

"Looking on the aspect which things present, the observer is tempted to ask, 'Where are those revolutionists about whom for the last four years there has

* Some curious facts have been communicated on this subject. As long back as memory reaches, it has been the fact that, on an average, from twenty to thirty individuals are nightly taken up by the boutonschniks or police sentinels, and lodged at the police stations for theft, drunkenness, or other offences. During the three days following the news of Alexander's death, not a single person was taken up; yet the spirit shops were closed only during the first of those three days. When the unfortunate inclination of the Russ for brandy is taken into consideration, this is a striking fact.

On the 26th, the day when the revolt broke out, the grand master of police caused all the brandy in the spirit shops and taverns to be turned into the canals which intersect St. Petersburg in every direction.

been so much talk, or of whom so great fear was expressed? Why do they not shew themselves at this critical juncture? Never was a moment better suited to their views!'

"Constantine is emperor. All is done in his name, which appears in every official act. His portrait has been already engraved, with the inscription, 'Constantine I., Emperor of all the Russias.' The council of the empire constitutes the acting regency until the arrival of the prince. The public seem to desire that he should reign; not so the great personages. Who can say what may be the event? Doubtless, the honourable course for Constantine to pursue would be to adhere to his word once passed; but how immense the temptation to swerve from it. Why should his brother, his mother, and the great courts of the empire, have exposed him to it, knowing as they did the arrangements entered into between him and Alexander? It is difficult to explain their conduct. We cannot but regard the conduct of the council of the empire and of the directing senate, bodies which are the appointed guardians of the laws, as reprehensible. The deeds, together with the last will of the late emperor on the subject of the succession, had been deposited in four different places, under the guardianship of four different bodies, by the command of the czar; they were not legal, those guardians asserted, because they had not been promulgated. But in their reception of the deposit, the three courts of the state had contracted an obligation to obey the testament

they held, and which in no way derogated from the force of the existing law. The council of the empire would have acted rightly had it shewn itself superior to technical difficulties, and persisted in the course prescribed to it, which was that of proclaiming Nicholas, even in spite of himself; and if he had been obstinate in his refusal, the title would have passed to his son Alexander Nicholaiovitch, and after him to the Grand-Duke Michael, youngest son of Paul I. What would have been the results if Constantine had said, 'I had formally renounced the crown. I no longer looked upon it as my heritage; I did not desire it: but I have been proclaimed in spite of myself; homage is rendered me; fealty is sworn to me; the nation demands me! Well, the will of the nation shall be my law!' Probably, the Grand-Duke Nicholas has too exalted an opinion of his brother's honour, to fear that he will break his word; but does he know all that is hidden within that mystery—the human heart? Besides he is making too light of, he is trifling with, an oath which the whole people are required to take. At best must not his conduct be attributed to pusillanimity? The Russian princes are courageous; but is it not probable that he now fears that the disposition of the army, or even of the nation at large, may be little in his favour? Certainly he is not popular. Perhaps he may have argued with himself,

"'If Constantine, true to his word, freely and publicly confirm his renunciation; from that moment I shall be the legitimate heir, and no objection can be

raised ; then my honourable conduct towards my brother will have won for me the good will of many by whom I am not now beloved." Perhaps he acted simply from generosity and fraternal love of an exalted character. I am lost amid my own conjectures ; and persons who well know the grand-duke are perplexed in forming an opinion.

" In intimate circles a thousand questions are asked below their breath respecting the new emperor. What system will he follow ? Will Araktchëieff, with his auxiliaries, Magnitzki, Rounitch, &c., retain their influence, and if not, who will succeed to it ? Will not Constantine bethink himself of the circumstances to which he owes his name, and which caused him to be surrounded with Greek officers even from his infancy ? What will he do with the Princess Lowitcz ? Will she become empress ? Will a Pole reign in Russia ? Will a Catholic be the wife of the temporal head of the orthodox church ? These questions as yet receive no replies, except the one which includes M. Magnitzki, who has been obliged to quit the capital, or has seen good reason to do so, and to withdraw to the seat of his academic duties, to which nothing has hitherto been able to keep him ; because he had another task to fulfil, that, namely, of continually seeking evidences of conspiracy, of which he has long dreamed day and night. General Araktchëieff, head of the military colonies, and factotum to Alexander, is wavering and undecided. At first he withdrew from the metropolis, but he has now appeared again.

Count Nesselrode talks of retiring to his estates. He represents the policy of the Holy Alliance, and he waits to see whether that will still be favourable. In short, all is uncertainty.

"The reign of Constantine, if he is destined to reign, might be salutary to Russia. His very character, absolute and fiery, might produce beneficial effects. It may be well conceived that the eye of one man cannot be extended over the breadth of this immense empire, embracing all its multitudinous concerns. The administration of justice, and of the interior, are often in bad hands, and are too little watched over. The superior agents, unchecked and almost irresponsible, do what appears good in their own eyes; like true satraps, they tyrannize over those below them, sell justice, and deny it to such as cannot purchase it. Under the deceased emperor, they ran small risk of detection; and even if discovered in their guilt, the mildness of the monarch, their family connexions, the means of corruption they possessed, to which members of the great body of the state are not inaccessible, and the powerful protection they manage by one means or another to obtain, served as so many shields with which they hoped to cover themselves and to escape the disgrace they had merited. This state of things could no longer exist under a sovereign at once severe, stern, and just: and though it could not be expected of a man reigning over half Europe, that he should make himself acquainted with all the affairs of the provinces, yet the very terror of his

name would keep the wicked in restraint, and the example he would make of those detected in maladministration would be salutary to the rest; he would doubtless probe many a wound, and amputate many a gangrened limb; he would declare war against abuses; and even though the general administration might be neglected, deeds of violence would be repressed, denials of justice would be exposed, and iniquity of all kinds would be held in check."

"In short after a long period, during which little has been done, the political machinery would be set again in motion, and a new and vigorous impulse would be given to it.

"This might not perhaps be the case, should Nicholas ascend the throne. Still young and inexperienced, he would probably hardly have courage to enter upon a career of reform; he would perhaps be content to tread in the steps of his brother and predecessor, whom he had been accustomed to regard as a model of perfection. He has been accustomed to swear by his brother; he knows no other system than his; he has learned to love that which he loved, to esteem that which he esteemed, and to disregard all that did not merit his approbation.

"No great talents are recognisable in Nicholas; his studies have not been of the most serious kind, though conducted under the direction of his mother, a woman of strong sense and firm will. It was said at Gotchina, that Nicholas and his brother Michael shewed so little disposition to profit by the instructions of their tutors,

or to yield obedience to them, that it sometimes needed all the authority of the mother to uphold that of the master."

In resuming the thread of our recital, we must transport ourselves to Warsaw, a majestic city, late the scene of agitations and ill-directed efforts after ill-comprehended liberty, but perfectly tranquil at the date of our history. Restricted and oppressed, its unhappy people concealed under a veil of mystery plots which still darkly agitated them. Its population, then more numerous than at present, had little affection for Russia. Though Constantine was continually devising some new embellishment, and though he did his utmost to give spirit to commerce, to endow the university with rich collections, and to raise the value of depressed property; and though Alexander on his late visit had manifested gracious intentions, taking leave of the diet with the following benevolent words, "I quit you with regret; yet satisfied in having seen your labours for the good of the country," the Poles were not to be conciliated. Groaning under their yoke, the people preserved an external calmness, and to judge from appearances, one might have imagined that the proud sense of national dignity had been broken by foreign thraldom.

Owing to the labours of Constantine, the army was in a high state of efficiency; this at least flattered the national pride, and yielded it some consolation amid its misfortunes.

At the period of which we speak, the cæsarovitch,

just returned from a visit to Dresden, had received the Grand-Duke Michael, who had paid him a visit. He of course fêted his guest; he did not confine himself to reviews in which he could parade the Polish army of his own creation, but rejoicings of every kind succeeded one another. The imperial party was engaged in a gala in the interior of Belvidere, when disquieting tidings concerning the health of Alexander first arrived from Taganrog. The princes passed some days in much anxiety; but the fatal issue of the malady was known to them on the evening of the 7th, that is, thirty-six hours earlier than it arrived at St. Petersburg. A courier direct from Taganrog brought despatches from the Baron Diebitsch and the Prince Volkronski. Plunged in affliction at the loss of one they so greatly loved, the two brothers had at least the consolation of sympathizing with each other in their grief. None were admitted to their presence; and Constantine, notwithstanding the ordinary regularity of his habits, kept his chamber for two days.

On the 26th of November (8th of December,) he wrote to his mother, the Empress Marie. In his letter, after having spoken of their common loss, as became a brother and a Christian, he referred to the act of renunciation, which he had formerly subscribed, together with the acceptance of that act by the emperor, who had addressed to him a rescript on the subject, which was to remain sealed in his hands until the decease of his imperial majesty, a copy of which he enclosed. His letter ran thus:

"Accustomed from my infancy to obey the will of my late father, as that of the emperor, and since his decease, of the emperor my brother and your imperial majesty, still, in accordance with this principle, I consider it an obligation upon me to cede my right to the succession to the Grand-Duke Nicholas, and his heirs, conformably to the regulations of the act of the empire, on the order of succession in the imperial family." From this passage, it appears to us evident, that the cæsarovitch acted originally simply from a deference to the superior will of the sovereign; but, having taken this first step, he then, of his own free will and without constraint, resolved to adhere to his act. Towards the close of the same letter, he adds, "Having thus expressed my sentiments, which are sincere, as they are unchangeable, I cast myself at the feet of your imperial majesty, humbly praying you to honour with your gracious acceptance my present letter, and to cause its contents to be confided to the person whom they concern, in order that the will of his imperial majesty, my late sovereign and benefactor, may be thoroughly fulfilled, as well as the assent which your imperial majesty has given to this deed."

At the same time, Constantine made similar communications to Nicholas, referring for details to what he had already written to his august mother, whom he had requested, he said, to communicate to him to whom it imported to know it, his unchangeable resolution on this subject, in order that it might be duly carried into execution. The letter continued thus: "After this

declaration I regard it as a sacred duty, very humbly to pray your imperial majesty to deign to accept, from me first, the oath of subjection and fidelity, and to permit me to state to you that, not aspiring to any new dignity or title, I desire only to preserve the title of cæsarovitch, with which I was honoured for my services by our revered father. Your imperial majesty will make me happy by deigning to accept the sentiments of my veneration, or of my unbounded devotion, the pledge for which may be found in the thirty years' faithful service which I have zealously rendered to their imperial majesties deceased, of revered memory, our father and brother. The same sentiments which have animated me towards them will not cease to fill my mind also towards your imperial majesty and your heirs, and will remain with me till the close of my days."

Charged with these important despatches, the Grand-Duke Michael quitted Warsaw to hasten to his afflicted mother. He arrived in St. Petersburg on the 13th. A distance of 312 leagues separates the two cities. Nothing could be more clear or decisive than the documents of which the prince was the bearer; but, after all that had been done in the interval, they threw the imperial family into new perplexity. Happily, the enlightened mind of Nicholas pointed out to him at once the conduct he ought to pursue in this complication of embarrassments, and his firmness fitted him for the emergency. He proclaimed, in his manifesto of accession, "However decisive were the acts which

Constantine transmitted to us, and however clearly they might prove that the resolution of his imperial highness was irrevocable, yet our own sentiments, together with the state of this momentous affair, led us to defer the publication of them, until his imperial highness should have declared his will with respect to the oath which we and the whole empire had taken to him."

Nicholas requested his brother Michael, after a short repose, to return to Warsaw, and explain to the cæsarovitch the line of conduct he had adopted. Meantime, no proclamation was made at St. Petersburg. The Grand-Duke Michael did indeed set out; but he did not get to the end of his journey. Meeting at Dorpot, in Livonia, the confidential messenger who was bearer of the reply given by Constantine to the first notifications which had been made to him, and having learned from his lips, that the resolution of the cæsarovitch was unchangeable, he retraced his course, and arrived just in time to act his part in the important drama of which the capital now became the theatre.

After the departure of his youngest brother, Constantine preserved a profound silence, not venturing until orders should arrive from St. Petersburg, to proclaim the new czar. Thus, although the important decision which determined the future fate of the empire issued from Warsaw, yet all in that city wore the air of suspense. The tenor of the letter from Nicholas, which arrived at Belvidere on the 14th December,

together with that of the reply made to it by the cæsarovitch, remained unknown. On the same day Constantine also received communications from the council of the empire, and from the senate. Without recognising the title of "imperial majesty," which the courier gave him, he broke the seal of the first packet, read the letter of the president, Prince Lapoukhin, and replied to it on the 15th in a manner to prevent all further steps or manifestations in his favour. With respect to the second packet, when he again perceived the same address, "To his Majesty the Emperor," he would not even open it, declaring that it was not to him that it was addressed, and returned it sealed, accompanied with a reprimand to the Prince Labanoff Rostopki, to whom he wrote, that "Since by the supreme will of his imperial majesty, late deceased, the Grand Duke Nicholas had been designated as the successor to the throne, the directing senate as guardian of the will of his late imperial majesty, ought to have performed its duty by carrying it into execution, and must no longer delay to do so." What could he do more? Is it replied that he ought to have himself repaired to St. Petersburg? But in taking that step, is it not possible that he might have increased difficulties? Was there no danger attendant upon shewing himself to the inhabitants of the capital at such a moment? Was there no danger in quitting Warsaw at that juncture? Besides, whatever fears might be afloat, there was no sure presage of an immediate explosion at St. Petersburg.

The interregnum had already continued three weeks —a thing unheard of in Russia—when, on the 24th of December, Nicholas learned all that he could desire to know before accepting the sceptre. Now he no longer hesitated: the will of Providence had been declared; all notion of danger gave place to thoughts of duty. The heir of Alexander took his station on the throne of his fathers, and notified his accession to Constantine, and to the nation whom henceforward he was to rule.*

* The courier dispatched to Berlin was overtaken by a messenger sent to him with a second despatch, making known the accession of Nicholas to his father-in-law, the King of Prussia. The courier had set out under authority of a passport bearing the name of Constantine.

CHAPTER IV.

ACCESSION OF NICHOLAS I.—MILITARY REVOLT AT ST. PETERSBURG.

THE Emperor Nicholas dates his accession from the 1st December, 1825, the day on which his brother Alexander died.. His reign did not, however, in reality commence until the 24th, when the manifesto of the accession was signed, though not made public.

This remarkable act, from which extracts have already been given, was drawn up with great talent in the primitive Russ. It was attributed to the privy-councillor Speranski, but received some touches from the superior hand of Karamsin, the celebrated historian; and perhaps the emperor himself contributed to the merit of its diction.

After having explained the situation and state of affairs, lamented in the most pathetic terms the death of Alexander, and briefly discussed the arrangement, by virtue of which the succession pertained to him, Nicholas continued,

"In consequence of these acts, and according to the fundamental law of the empire, our heart being filled with respect for the impenetrable decrees of an overruling Providence, we ascend the throne of our ancestors, the throne of the empire of all the Russias, of the

kingdom of Poland, and of the grand-duchy of Finland, which are inseparable from Russia, and we command;

"I. That the oath of fidelity be taken to us and to our heir, his imperial highness the Grand Duke Alexander, our well beloved son.*

"II. That the epoch of our accession be dated 19th November (1st December), 1825.

"Finally, we invite all our faithful subjects to unite with us in fervent prayers to Almighty God, that he may grant us strength to support the burden which his holy will has imposed upon us; that he may sustain us in our firm intentions to live only for the good of our beloved country, and to walk in the steps of the monarch whose loss we deplore, that our reign may be like a continuance of his; that we may fulfil the objects which he had contemplated for the happiness of Russia; and that his sacred memory may nourish in us the desire to merit the benediction of heaven and the love of our country."

Noble and pious language, and not less modest than noble and pious; nor have we a right to question its sincerity, though the Emperor Nicholas, as he has himself since discovered, might have determined to pursue a better line of conduct than that of his predecessors, especially in the internal government of the kingdom.

But the imperial family were animated with respect, almost amounting to adoration, for the deceased sovereign; perhaps, also, Nicholas, when he held this lan-

* Born the 29th of April, 1818, and the only son of Nicholas at the time.

guage, had his eyes fixed chiefly upon the first period of the preceding reign, the promises of which were not accomplished during its later portion; may the like not be verified in regard to his own? The career of Nicholas has already stretched over nearly a quarter of a century; we pray that the years yet permitted him may not belie the prognostics drawn from his deeds and words at the time of his accession, and that he may not give cause of triumph to his detractors by relaxing his vigilance, by yielding to difficulties, or by allowing his courage to be exhausted by opposition.

Upon Nicholas mainly depends the future destiny of Russia. Unbounded hopes are attached to him, whatever may be said by those who only behold in him the oppressor of Poland. All eyes are fixed upon him; and the more earnestly, because the character of the heir presumptive, though amiable, is not strong.* Nicholas may fulfil the mission expected from a Russian emperor of our day; he may civilize the people; abolish the barbarism of many ancient customs; and improve the depraved magistracy and police, whose corruption keeps the country ever on the brink of an abyss.

It would seem that providence has reserved great things for Nicholas. He has been taught the art of ruling by the most salutary discipline, that of mis-

* It is said that the Grand-Duke Alexander Nicholaiovitch, one day remarked: "The charge of ruling a nation is heavy indeed." His brother Constantine quickly replied, "If there is nothing else to torment you, speak the word, brother, and I will relieve you of that same charge."

fortune; no species of trial has been spared him. The clamour of insurrection, and the whistling of shot, saluted his accession; and if he was so fortunate as to repress civil war at its birth, first in 1825, and again in 1832, in the heart of his military colonies, he has not been able to prevent the breaking out of contests of uncertain issue, upon various points of his frontiers. He has witnessed the fall of one of his political allies, and has had proof of the ill will of another power, by whose persuasions the cabinet of St. Petersburg had, in time past, been guided. Conflagrations have covered some of his most flourishing cities with ruins. Abo, Joula, Kasan, have felt the devouring element. Fire destroyed his own residence, the Winter Palace, which was rebuilt in the almost miraculously short period of a year. Poland, often in arms, and with great difficulty kept down, has constantly been a thorn in his side. He has resolved, if it be possible, himself to terminate the Russian perplexity with respect to her, and not delegate the task to his successor. The cholera has exercised terrific ravages throughout the empire. Repeated scarcities have afflicted the midland provinces. Contemptible writers, some of whose pamphlets have been hailed by the seditious as oracular, have attacked the honour of the sovereign. The happy father of a most promising family, he has been reached by the keen storms of fate, which have fallen upon his most cherished idols.*

* We may add, that quite recently he had a narrow escape from drowning; the ice of the Neimen breaking under the weight of his carriage.

The day has not yet arrived for pronouncing to what extent Nicholas, so sternly schooled, has comprehended the seriousness of his responsibilities. The mission of presiding over a vast empire, the future theatre of a new phase in the development of the species, where sixty millions of men are invoking the benefits of civilization, is no light one.

We cannot doubt that the brother of Alexander has appreciated his task. Seated on the throne, he entered at once upon his work, and with rare courage proceeded upon a track planted with thorns. If he does not permit himself to be turned aside from it; if his energies are increased rather than depressed; if he boldly lays the foundation of an edifice which, when reared, shall bear the inscription, "Education and Morality," his name will be revered and blessed by the Muscovite people. It is not they who will condemn him for his conduct towards Poland; they indeed compelled him to it, by the ferocious cries, "Hatred for hatred; blood for blood; death to our irreconcileable enemies!" Nor will posterity be too severe: her retrospective glance, more clear-sighted and more impartial than that of cotemporaries, perceives the *entire* of a case; she sees compensations side by side with evils; and she will perhaps acquit Nicholas for a line of policy, consequent upon the painful difficulties of a situation of which he was less the author than the victim. Necessity will add her plea to his excuse; and it will be remembered, that there is a Providence who

visits the sins of the fathers, not only upon the children, but even upon distant generations.

The day of the 24th of December was passed in meditations and conferences in the Winter Palace, thenceforth to be the residence of the imperial couple. Advice was sought from various personages, successively called to council. The moment was critical, as was well understood by the principal members of his council; for letters from Taganrog had, by this time, made the government fully acquainted with all the machinations which had pressed with grievous weight upon the dying monarch, and spread consternation around him. General Diebitsch had, on his own responsibility, sent aide-de-camp General Tchernecheff to Kief, charged with the ticklish mission of arresting Colonel Pestel, the soul of the plot in the army, together with several other conspirators. Tidings from thence were anxiously expected.

It was probable that an insurrection would break out in Little Russia, where the volcano had long rumbled. In the capital itself, no immediate danger was apprehended; but measures of precaution must be taken there also.

During that day nothing transpired; no communication was made to the public; if indeed it be allowable to call by such a name the inhabitants of a state, where all is mystery, and where individuals do not seem to regard themselves as concerned with matters which affect the whole community, whose personal

submission seems to have annihilated the sentiment of community.

At length, on the evening of the morrow, the 25th of December, the council of the empire was convoked, to take to the Emperor Nicholas I., Paulovitch, the oath of fidelity which he had refused to receive from it fifteen days earlier.

To its sitting were invited many individuals who were not members; and it did not break up till two o'clock in the morning. At seven, the other great bodies of the state, the senate, and the holy Synod, went through the same formality. At day-break, the citizens of St. Petersburg learned into whose hands the helm of the empire had definitively been placed.

The 26th of December opened,—a day of mourning for the Russian annals. The preceding evening, at the very moment when the council of the empire were assembling, the emperor had received a communication respecting the mischief which was preparing in the heart of the capital. A letter from the Sub-Lieutenant Rostoftsoff had informed him that the plot was ripe, and that the guard had been for two days wavering.* In consequence of this information, it was determined not to venture to summon the guard to assemble publicly on the 26th; but that the oath should be administered early in the morning, in the barracks of each regiment. Government did not wait even till the

* The conspirators were apprised that the government had possessed itself of this information, in consequence of which they decided in those words, since become so famous—"Our scabbards are broken, our sabres must no longer be hid."

manifesto could be published,—an unfortunate circumstance; for the surprise by which many well-intentioned but ignorant men were thus overtaken, and the seeming recklessness with which one oath newly administered was thrown aside to make way for another, aroused the suspicion of a snare spread for incredulity. A more prudent step was that of changing the palace-guard during the night. The life-grenadiers, against whom heavy suspicion existed, were placed there; with them was a detachment of the Finnish regiment, in number sufficient to double all the posts; and to these, during the day, were joined the sappers of the guard.

The palace resembled a citadel; and but for the precautions which were taken there, incalculable disasters would have occurred. The danger was greater than it had been supposed. It is true that the conspirators were not prepared to act in the capital of the empire, nor were they ready for action at the moment. But the fact of the throne being vacant, and the prolongation of this uncertainty as to their sovereign, supplied, it appeared to them, an opportunity too promising to be allowed to pass. They did not number in their ranks many men of large fortune; for the Russians are nice calculators, and the rich were little disposed to enter into a plot of doubtful success,—which failing, would ruin them,—or successful, might cause a revolution with regard to property; but many younger members of powerful families were implicated, and persons of standing had guaranteed their support,

though as yet they had taken no leading part in the plot. Many officers, some of whom were of high rank and name, had also promised their concurrence. These officers were thickly scattered in the regiments of the imperial guard, and, above all, in the marine force dependent on it; they were found also in the grenadiers, in the regiment of Moscow, and in that of Izmailoff, of which the Grand-Duke Nicholas had been the colonel. The revolt once openly begun, who could say how far its ravages might extend?

We must break the thread of our narrative, in order to trace the origin of the conspiracy, to describe the secret societies whence it derived its support, and the principal divisions of them into that of the north and that of the south. We shall attempt to shew the object of such societies in a country where passive obedience to the orders of the czar is recognized almost as an article of faith; and we shall further do our best to expose the contradictory schemes of many bewildered men, some of whom were given to that servile imitation of foreigners, which to Russians holds the place of native conceptions, whilst others were devoured by ambition, and made liberalism a cloak covering selfish projects, depraved morals, and levity of spirit. At present, we will follow the march of events, and introduce the reader to the raising of the revolt by the society of the north, in St. Petersburg, on the 26th of December. In the first place, however, we must make acquaintance with three principal agents in that society; namely, Conrad Ryleïeff; Sergius,

Prince Troubetskoi; and Eugene, Prince Obolenski.

Of these three leaders, Obolenski was the most impassioned and fiery; Ryleïeff the most firm and prudent; and Troubetskoi the most important, on account of his connections.

He, indeed, belonged to that ancient family, now exceedingly numerous, one of whose members having, in times past, delivered his country from the Polish yoke, ventured to raise his eyes even to the throne of the czars.*

Troubetskoi had a cousin who was aide-de-camp general to the emperor.† He himself, having long struggled with necessity, had at length ameliorated his fortune and condition by a marriage with one of the daughters of Count Laval,‡ by which marriage he had become brother-in-law to Count Lebzeltern, the Austrian minister at the Russian court, and nephew to the Princess Bélocelski-Bélozerski, afterwards a lady of honour: he was also brother-in-law to Count Sergius Potëmkin. The career of honour was open before him; already he was colonel of the staff-major, attached to the 4th corps of the army, and he had just been appointed military governor of Kief. The im-

* We shall speak of him in the Appendix, Note (2.)

† This Prince Troubetskoi (Vassili Sergeovitch), was sent to Berlin to notify the accession of Nicholas to the King of Prussia. He is still living, and is a general of cavalry, a senator, &c.

‡ An emigrant French family, who went to Russia in the suite of the Prince de Condé; but who had nothing in common with the family of Montmorency. Count Laval held an important post in the department of foreign affairs.

perial liberality had some time before furnished him with means to make a considerable stay at Paris, for the benefit of his education. He was disinterested, of gentle temper, and good heart; much given to letters; and generally beloved. With more firmness of character, stricter principles, and an enlarged education, he would have been a remarkable man; but these qualifications are scarcely to be found amongst a people who have been thus roughly characterized by Diderot, "The Russians are rotten before they are ripe!"

Prince Obolenski was descended from a noble family, of equal importance with that of Troubetskoi: the princes of Tchernigoff were his ancestors; but the high sounding title of prince, passing in Russia from a father to all his children, is often allied with fortune of the most moderate amount, and does not necessarily imply that elevated and dignified estate usually enjoyed by the members of the English peerage, and in times preceding the revolution, by the old nobility of France. Obolenski, a lieutenant in the imperial guard, and aide-de-camp to general Bistrom, was as poor as Troubetskoi had been before his marriage; like him he was young, polished, and distinguished. A personal intimacy had for some time existed between him and the emperor.

Ryleïeff, the soul of the association of the north, was neither high-born, rich, nor powerful; a simple noble, he had left the corps of cadets with a very inferior amount of information, but with determined principles of action. He early quitted the army, in which he

had held only the rank of sub-lieutenant. In consequence of that principle of patriots, which induces them sometimes to devote themselves to judicial functions, in order that they may not fall into evil hands, he accepted the unsalaried post of secretary to the criminal tribunal of St. Petersburg. To secure a maintenance, he entered into the service of the American company, a great commercial privileged association. At the time of the revolt he was its secretary, a humble office, though it could only be filled by a person of real capability; and in truth Ryleïeff possessed superior intellect, in conjunction with some excellent qualities of heart. Moved by principles, rather than by passsions, he acted only on reflection devoted to theories — abstract indeed, but disinterested—he acted, in short, from a sense of duty. By inclination a democrat, and a great admirer of the constitution of the United States, he nevertheless well understood that such a constitution supposes citizens, but does not form them; and, therefore, that it was inapplicable to Russia, whose population he beheld divided into masters and slaves. He admitted that monarchy, in such a state of society, can be the only ark of refuge; but he was indignant to see it absolute and unlimited; shocked that despotism should exist upon the throne and slavery in the cabinet, and grieved at the absence of that which constitutes the strength of a state, namely, a quick sense of honour in the higher classes, and of moral dignity in all. He saw with mortification that his country could not

stand a comparison with any other; he hoped to limit the absolute power of the monarch, and to transform the autocrat into a constitutional sovereign. Gentle and humane by nature, he could yet be firm when circumstances demanded the display of that quality. We will anticipate, in order to give an instance of this. The ferocious Iakoubovitch persisted in requiring that the association should strike their blow at the first instant possible. Ryleïeff conjured him, even on his knees, to wait with patience one or two months, that the cause might not be compromised by inexpedient haste. He was scarcely listened to. Then, with a threatening air, he declared that in spite of themselves he knew how to prevent them from acting, and that, were it necessary, he would kill Iakoubovitch on the spot, or denounce him to the government.*

Ryleïeff was looked upon as one of the hopes of the Russian Parnassus, which makes this stern quality of mind the more surprising. In his verses he had presumed to declare that he was superior to every other citizen,

Ja né poéth, agraj' danine.

His poem, *Voïnarofski*, where he personified himself under the name of Mazeppa, but made his bosom friend, Alexander Bestoujeff, play a part which eclipsed his own, was quite prophetic. He had, in concert with that friend, published "The Polar Star," an almanac of some notoriety; and it is probable, that if his po-

* "Report," pp. 84, 85.

litics had not wrought his ruin, he would have shone amongst the small constellation of Russian poets.

Between these three men, so different in character, but whose combinations seemed to form a perfect whole, entire agreement reigned. The association of the north acted by them; they formed its life and spirit.

Amongst their principal auxiliaries must be named Lieutenant-Colonel Batenkoff, a man of some spirit, enterprising, and ambitious. He entered the association of the north as late as 1825, probably at the instigation of mortified pride; for he had just lost an advantageous post in the military colonies. Another of their agents, Captain Iakoubovitch, had been expelled from the imperial guard in 1817, on account of the part he had taken in a duel which ended fatally. He nourished a deep resentment of his disgrace, which he carried so far as to vow vengeance upon the emperor. In order to execute it, he quitted Georgia, where he served in the regiment of dragoons of Nijnïovogorod; and had no sooner held a conference with the conspirators, than he joined them.*

A third subordinate ally was Peter Kakhofski, a retired lieutenant, equally blood-thirsty and ready for crime with Iakoubovitch; he laughed at the

* When he learned the death of the Emperor Alexander, he rushed into the apartment of Rylcïeff, foaming with rage, and cried, "The emperor is dead; your other conspirators have taken from me my prey." This blood-thirsty wretch died in prison before receiving his sentence. He left no property, and the emperor took charge of his daughters.

scruples of his coadjutors, whom he contemptuously styled the *philanthropists*. Such was not the character of the brothers Bestoujeff; they were amiable and generally beloved; they were not born for crime, and the delusions of specious reasoning alone led them into it. They were sons of the present Councillor of State Bestoujeff, known for his political writings. Of the five brothers, four entered into the conspiracy. We have already spoken of Alexander Bestoujeff, the devoted friend of Ryleïeff, with whose most secret thoughts he was acquainted, and whose perilous enterprise he seconded with the zeal of conviction.

He was twenty-eight or thirty years of age, captain of the second in the dragoons of the guard, and attached as aide-de-camp to the person of Duke Alexander of Wurtemburg, director-general of the ways of communication.*

Alexander Bestoujeff was gifted with a lively imagination, and had acquired literary reputation. His brother Nicholas, a poet, and the author of "Recollections of Holland," was a lieutenant in the navy; the third brother was second captain in the regiment of Moscow; the fourth, Peter, was ensign in the navy, and aide-de-camp to Vice-Admiral Möller. These young men, who are not to be confounded with Bestoujeff-Rumine, of whom we shall have to speak in connection with the conspiracy in the south, were

* That brother of the empress-mother, who commanded at the siege of Dantzic in 1814, and whose son married the royal Princess Marie of France, died at Gotha in 1833.

possessed of some information and considerable intelligence, and of ardent though unenlightened patriotism. They conceived that, by one application of the probing-knife, they could eradicate a wound which covered the whole social body, and lost sight of the fact that a patient and long continued process alone can cure evils widely spread and of long standing. Amongst those in whom the heads of the conspiracy placed the greatest confidence, though they had only recently drawn him into their plot, was Colonel Boulatoff, commander of the 6th regiment of chasseurs; a man who possessed some noble qualities, and who was beloved in the regiment of the grenadiers where he had served. The colonel, however, by no means answered their expectations; there was a levity and frivolity about his character, a trait recognized every where amongst the Russians. This levity led him to join the plot, and the same levity caused the initiated to accept him. Frivolity is the mother of deception; in this case it cost the conspirators dear.

They had built great hopes on the Emperor Alexander's fault, in not having by a public act, during his life-time, announced his successor. The matter-of-course manner with which at his death the crown was transmitted to Constantine, surprised none more than themselves. But as the dagger was one of their weapons, as assassination was not any startling crime to them, as they numbered in their ranks men who would execute the blackest deeds, little did it signify to them that a new sovereign was raised to the throne: they

would take his life; and this execrable crime might be perpetrated with less remorse upon the violent cæsarovitch, than upon the mild, benevolent Alexander, though he, indeed, accessible and less suspicious, would have been more easily reached. However, no immediate attempt was made. On the 9th December, Prince Obolenski sent to inquire of Alexander Mouravieff, whether the chevalier-guards might be counted on in case of revolt. The reply was in the negative. Nothing was done; and afterwards the conspirators reproached themselves with having lost a most favourable opportunity, "one," said Batenkoff, "which will not occur again for fifty years." He continued, "had there been good and worthy heads in the council of the empire, Russia would at the same moment have sworn faith to a new sovereign, and to new laws: now all is hopelessly lost!" The question whether the association of the north should be dissolved was mooted, and might have been answered by the deed, but that Ryleïeff inspired new courage into his association, and held them together.

When the tidings brought from Warsaw by the Grand-Duke Michael became known to them, the confidence of the conspirators revived; they then began to see how great was the advantage they might draw from the present conjuncture of affairs, in the absence of all public knowledge of events and arrangements, and with a young inexperienced prince, who had done nothing to conciliate the army, where he was chiefly known by his severity for trifling irregularities. Two

courses presented themselves; either they might cause the tidings of the renunciation of Constantine to pass for a lie; or they might hold the oath of fidelity to him which Nicholas had taken, as still pledging him, and as a virtual abdication on his own part.

They prepared at length to act; and in order to ensure unity, they chose a *dictator*, who alone should direct the whole enterprise. Prince Troubetskoi was elevated to that post, less on account of his energy of character, (he recognized within himself his own weakness in that particular,) than on account of the accident of his name, which was connected with transactions so important in past Russian history. At the epoch when his ancestor pretended to the throne, Michael Romanoff, aided by the powerful support of the church, had been preferred before him; but the claims of Troubetskoi stood recorded, and the record gave lustre to the family. He was, however, little suited to the office now imposed upon him. The conspirators felt it; and when, in the evening of the 25th, Ryleïeff asked, "have we not chosen an admirable chief?" Iakoubovitch replied with a sardonic smile, "Yes, in stature." But Ryleïeff felt the necessity of acting under the auspices of a powerful name. In his own person he did not possess much authority or weight, and yet he it was who kept all together. In his subsequent confession, he said, "I own myself to have been the principal author of the events of the 14th (26th) December. I might have arrested all action; but I set others the example of a criminal

ardour." And, in truth, it was at his instigation that they held their assemblies; he it was who inspired the dictator, whose orders were passively executed by the members of the association; for as the "Official Report" remarks, "they were as docile in obedience to an unknown and unauthorized power, as they were violent in their resistance to legitimate authority."

Not a moment was to be lost: further delay would be in effect to abandon the enterprise. It was necessary then to make clear arrangements concerning the steps to be taken. Conferences were held, and various projects proposed. Those suggested by Troubetskoi and Batenkoff were, notwithstanding the urgency of the case, and the need which now existed for decisive and intelligible arrangements, vague and futile. Ryleïeff held his plan in reserve. It was simple and direct; and from that very cause, might not, if divulged at the moment, have exercised sufficient hold upon the imaginations of his accomplices. He comprehended only the straightforward course: his uprightness, if the term may be applied to a great criminal, disdained the crooked and tortuous paths that Batenkoff would have pursued.

On the supposition that the troops would refuse to take the oath which would be required from them in the name of Nicholas, and that the cæsarovitch would, in that event, repair to St. Petersburg, Batenkoff proposed to divide the conspirators into two bands, one of which should proclaim Constantine Emperor, and the other Nicholas. Probably the balance would in-

cline in favour of the former; in that case, either the Grand-Duke Nicholas would withdraw, which, if he did, they would consider an act of abdication, and would proclaim his son, Alexander II, a minor; or he would maintain his right; and, in that case, conditions should be imposed upon him. He should be required to consent to a change in the public institutions, and to the establishment of a provisional government; in which event, all the conspirators would declare for him.

These were vain propositions; nor was much more importance attached to several other projects; for instance, to convert the military colonies into a national guard; to place the fortress of St. Petersburg under municipal authority, and to make of it the *palladium of Russian liberty;* to establish two legislative chambers; and various local legislatures, &c. &c. It was Ryleïeff, as we have said, who gave the real direction to the course which was pursued.

On the 24th and 25th of December, the members of the plot repaired to his house in great numbers, but separately, or by twos only, lest they should awaken suspicion. Some entered, whilst others went out. During the former of these days, besides the Princes Troubetskoi and Obolenski, the brothers Bestoujeff, Iakoubovitch, Kakhofski, and Batenkoff, there went also the Baron de Steinheil, a rear-lieutenant colonel, a prudent and reflective man, who, having taken a disgust at the want of consideration shewn him at Moscow, had, within the last few months, repaired

to the metropolis, and offered his service to the conspirators. A lieutenant on the staff of the guard, Count Konovnitsin, sprung from the same stock as the Romanoffs, and related to a former minister of war and director of all the military establishments for education; a captain of the regiment of Moscow, Prince Chtchepine-Rostofski, of the blood of Rurik; the Captains Pouschtchin, of the squadron of pioneers of the guard; and Repin, of the Finnish chasseurs; Lieutenant Southoff, of the grenadiers; Lieutenant Arbonsoff, of the naval guard; and cornet Prince Odoïefski, a descendant of Rurik, and a poet. Each individual answered for his regiment; some with a degree of hesitation, others with perfect confidence. The marine guards especially were secure: that body was deeply infected with the spirit of revolt; and amongst them they had determined men, such as Nicholas Bestoujeff and Arbousoff, who, in concert with a lieutenant of the navy, Zavalichin, had established amongst themselves a special secret society.

As must always happen in assemblies of such a character, the members excited one another by the wildest suggestions. Captain Alexander Bestoujeff, an ardent poet, is reproached with having exclaimed, "I pass the Rubicon, and will force my onward way with the sabre!"

Passions grew still more warm, when the question arose, What was to be done with the members of the imperial family after the expected victory? Ryleïeff put an end to the dreadful discussion by declar-

ing that circumstances only could decide. He also was ready to pass the Rubicon; for he was not ignorant that information had been given to the emperor by the Sub-Lieutenant Rostoftsoff. "Comrades," he said, "you will find that we are betrayed; the court are in possession of much information; but they do not know our entire plans, and our strength is quite sufficient." A voice cried in reply, "The scabbards are broken; we can no longer hide our sabres."

It was resolved to await the day on which it should be determined to administer the oath to Nicholas, which it was believed could not be far distant, and then to work upon the troops, by representing the new oath that was exacted as an infraction of that which they had already solemnly sworn to the cæsarovitch, the true heir of the throne, who relied upon their faith. It was to be asserted, that the pretended renunciation of the crown by Constantine was an imposture, invented at St. Petersburg by him who wished to usurp his place, and was a snare spread for the innocent troops. Then those regiments who should have been persuaded to follow their officers in a revolt, were to be marched into the square before the senate-house, and Colonel Prince Troubetskoi was to take their command, and to act according to circumstances. Captain Iakoubovitch and Colonel Boulatoff were to act under him, and execute his orders. The conspirators were confident of success, and they hoped to avoid the effusion of blood, more especially if they could intimidate the senate, and compel it to support

their demands, which were to obtain from Nicholas or from the cæsarovitch, by its medium, the consent to a convocation of deputies from the provinces, who should choose the sovereign and establish a representative government. In the interval, a provisional government should be formed, and the senate should be compelled to choose its members from among the chiefs of the movement.

It was the desire of the conspirators that the insurrection should be restricted within these limits; yet it appears certain that Ryleïeff entertained the fear that, unless consummated by regicide, their enterprise would not be sure of success, and that it would meet with so many obstacles as to lead to a civil war. From this moment, he no longer resisted the counsel which prompted the assassination of the emperor. Kakhofski, one of those men who, in every country, present themselves at the moment when crime demands its agents, appeared to him a suitable instrument. Embracing him in the presence of many conspirators, he addressed him in these atrocious words, "Dear friend! you alone amongst us are solitary upon earth (he himself, Troubetskoi, Steinheil, and many other of their accomplices, were surrounded with family ties;) you ought to sacrifice yourself for the society: rid us, then, of the emperor."

Instructions were furnished to the association of the south, which would have been a most powerful ally, had it not been that very day deprived of its chiefs, in consequence of orders issued from Taganrog.

On the morning of the 25th, Troubetskoi entrusted Hippolyte Mouravieff-Apostol with a letter for his brother Lieutenant-Colonel Sergius, of the 2nd army; and Cornet Svistounoff, of the chevalier guards; with another mission for Major-General Michael Orloff, at Moscow. This last, elder brother of the Count Alexis Orloff, now head of the supreme police, and in the confidence of the emperor, had for some time kept aloof from the association with which before he had had close connection. Troubetskoi now pressed him to repair to St. Petersburg, without communicating a reason; but adding these words, "If any event is to transpire here, it will occur alike whether you are here, or whether you are absent." These letters never arrived at their destination.

The decisive moment approached. It was known in the association, which received perfect information of all that passed.

In the evening of the 25th, the conspirators once more assembled at the house of Ryleïeff.* They had received, from an officer recently arrived from the south, a captain in the guards, the false assurance that, in the second army, 100,000 men were ready to declare for them. An important functionary, a member of the association of the south, and chief advocate of the senate, Krasnokoutzki, presented himself amongst them, to inform them that the council of the empire

* It is said that the police had knowledge of this meeting, and gave information of it to the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, Count Miloradovitch, who only laughed, crying, "Bah! it is a set of dunces, met to read bad verses."

was convoked to meet at seven o'clock on the following morning, in order to take the oath. This led to the adoption of final measures: his part was assigned to each.

All the officers of the guard were to repair to their respective regiments to infuse disquietude amongst their men; to shake their confidence in the government; and to persuade them to refuse the oath. The first men who should be gained over were to be sent into the barracks to seduce others in their turn.

Thus, blindly confident, the conspirators already saw in imagination all the guard assembled on the great Isaac Square, before the senate house; where they prepared to await the measures which would be adopted by government when instructed of the defection of the troops.

Iakoubovitch proposed to force the spirit-shops and taverns, in order to ply both the soldiery and the populace with brandy, their favourite drink; to license general pillage; to carry off some of the banners from the churches, where they were placed; and to direct the mob upon the Winter Palace. This infernal project might have succeeded; for, though Siberia, that vast tomb, engulfing its living prey, relieves the capital of Russia of those hardened and desperate criminals, who are ready on any popular commotion to spread their dark and ill-omened forms among the mob in our western cities; yet it is crowded with *mougiks* (peasants), rendered brutal by ill-treatment and by drink, and whose miserable condition renders them

ready for any employment under revolutionary leaders. At St. Petersburg, the men who execute the orders of the police, and inflict corporal punishments, are not only Russians, but also Germans, regarded by the Russians as intruders; and this degrading office adds to the ill will of the natives against them. The *mougiks* number 75,000 men, either unmarried, or whose wives are left in the provinces.* These persons, habitually under the rod of the police, and subjected to a discipline unknown to the rest of the people, swallow their wrongs in silence, but rage broods in their breasts, which, in some hour of popular delirium, may tempt them to terrific vengeance. "When the wretched Russians break their chains," says Schiller, "it will not be before the free man, but before the slave, that the community must tremble."

The diabolical measures, proposed by Iakoubovitch, offered indeed the prospect of success; but, to the honour of the conspirators be it recorded, no one member of their body was found to second him. Ryleïeff vigorously opposed him; nor would he hear of the project of burning St. Petersburg, in case of failure in their attempt; but in such a result it was determined that the members should quit the metropolis, disperse themselves in the provinces, and seek to stir up insurrection there.

The whole night was passed in criminal conferences. At midnight, Iakoubovitch and Alexander Bestoujeff

* At St. Petersburg the women form only two-sevenths of the entire population: an alarming fact.

were, with many of their confederates, assembled in the dwelling of Arbousoff, lieutenant of the marine guard, with whom it was resolved to commence operations, because the greater number of the officers were already sure. During the evening, agents of the association had spread among the naval force rumours of an illegal oath, which was about to be exacted from the troops, who, it was said, would perjure themselves by taking it: that the cæsarovitch had not refused the throne; but on the contrary, that he was advancing to St. Petersburg with the first army, and that of Poland, to exterminate the traitors who should swear fidelity to any other than himself; that he was already arrived as far as Narva; and that it was the duty of every soldier to refuse the oath tendered to him.

Reports of the same nature were spread at a very early hour on the 26th; and whilst the senate, the Holy Synod, and the lesser authorities were engaged in taking the oath, Captain Prince Chtchépine-Rostofski and Michael and Alexander* Bestoujeff, followed by two other officers of the regiment, were passing through the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th companies, everywhere conjuring the soldiers to reject the oath. "They are deceiving us," said they; "the Grand-Duke Constantine has not refused the throne. He is in irons, as also the Grand-Duke Michael, the colonel of our regiment." Alexander Bestoujeff declared that he had

* Alexander Bestoujeff, when he had determined to strike, raised his tearful eyes to Heaven, and uttered the prayer, "Oh! God, if our enterprise is just, grant it thy support; if not, let thy will be accomplished with respect to us."

recently arrived from Warsaw with orders to oppose this act of treachery: his brother Michael cried, "The Emperor Constantine loves our regiment, and will increase its pay. Down with all those who are unfaithful to him!"

The eloquence of these young men impressed the soldiers. It was then the custom in the army for the soldiers to carry in ordinary, in the place of gun flints, small blocks of wood in their guns; these were called *derevaschki.* Now, in response to the address of their officers, they cried, "*Derevaschki daloï*" ("away with the wooden blocks"); and sought in the stores of the regiment for their flints and cartouches.

They had just regained their ranks, when an adjutant arrived, the bearer of an order from Major-General Baron Frederichs, commander of the regiment, who summoned all the officers to his presence.

"I no longer recognize the general," cried the Prince Chtchépine, and he ordered the companies to load; he then incited them to tear the colours from the grenadiers; and, seeing the general approach, he fell upon him, sword in hand, whilst his brother Alexander fired upon him with a pistol, which he drew from beneath his garments. The unhappy Frederichs dropped senseless upon the pavement. Major-General Chenchine, who commanded the brigade of the guard, of which the regiment of Moscow formed part, ran to his assistance; Chtchépine fell instantly upon him also, with his sabre, and continued his blows after he saw him stretched bleeding at his feet. No longer knowing

what he did, he hewed away at all who opposed him ; seized upon the colours; and succeeded in withdrawing his company from the barracks, who replied to the expostulations of the superior officers only by cries of, "Long live the Emperor Constantine!"

Arrived at this outer enclosure, and seeing that the other companies, restrained by Colonel Adlerberg and other faithful officers, did not follow them, they hesitated to advance, but repeatedly returned towards the regiments, earnestly trying to seduce them ; and at length succeeded in gaining over one of them, and some portions of others. They then marched tumultuously towards the open space before the senate, to the great astonishment of the population of that quarter, scarcely yet aware of the event of the day. On their way they were reinforced by various officers whom they met: they ranged themselves behind the statue of Peter the Great, there to wait for some promised reinforcements ; but, after tarrying a long time, none came but a battalion of the marines, and some companies of grenadiers. However, many discontented persons, who deemed this a favourable demonstration, assembled about them; and a large portion of the populace looked on with complacency, determined to take part in the proceedings the moment it might be done with safety.

Let us now turn aside to look into the winter palace and see what was transacting there.

The emperor, who had exercised his first act of sovereignty in promulgating his manifesto of accession,

awaited the tidings of the administration and acceptance of the oath. Minutes might well appear to him as hours; for he could not count upon his guard; and without his guard an emperor of Russia is as feeble as he is strong with its support: but let what would happen he was resolved to accomplish all the duties of the august mission, which he held had been accorded to him by the express will of Heaven. At half-past eleven, General Voinoff, commander-in-chief of the guard, and chief of its staff, together with the wise General Neidhardt, who has since been the able governor of the Caucasian provinces, came to announce to him that the formality had been peaceably gone through in the greater number of the regiments, and that if he had not received the same tidings from those of the grenadiers of Moscow, and of the marines, it was doubtless only on account of the distance of their barracks.

The danger seemed to be passed away; but a quarter of an hour later evil tidings arrived. Nicholas was informed that four officers of horse artillery had been put under arrest; and that it had been further necessary to confine the entire regiment to its quarters.

About one o'clock he learned the conduct of the regiment of Moscow, and was told of the open state of revolt of many companies ranged at no great distance from his palace. He instantly took such measures as the case required: sent orders to the regiment of Semenoff to go and repress the rebellion: and to the horse-guard to hold itself in readiness to obey the first requisition. He felt further that he ought to shew

himself at this moment; and having embraced his wife, Alexander Föedorovna, invoked with her in the chapel of the palace the divine aid, and endeavoured to give her courage by some words of affectionate assurance, he led the young grand-duke, then a charming boy of eight years of age, by the hand, and went to the principal body-guard of the palace, and ordered the men on duty to load their guns and guard every avenue. Then presenting his son to the soldiers he said: "I confide him to you;—to you I trust for his defence." The Finnish chasseurs were moved even to tears: they took him in their arms; lavished upon him a thousand caresses, and swore that their bodies should be ramparts before him. It was a touching sight to behold the imperial child, delicate rather than robust, pale, and of fair complexion, passed on from rank to rank, terrified perhaps by the caresses which these warlike men, now excited to the highest pitch, bestowed upon him. But he was in sure hands. When an act of confidence has touched the heart of the Russian soldier, and he has given his faith, he will be hewed to pieces rather than abandon his trust. The chasseurs watched over their precious charge, and refused to surrender him even to his governor, Colonel Mõerder, when he came to claim him.

"God knows the intention of all," they replied, "but we will only surrender up the son of our father to our father himself in his own person."

Nicholas, meantime, received the report of Count Miloradovitch, the Governor-general of St. Petersburg,

an officer of approved skill, but who had not shewn in his government the talent which his campaign of 1812 and 1814 had led the world to expect from him. Colonel Alexis Orloff had already hastened to put himself at the head of some squadrons of the horse-guards, whose quarters were not far off; and he now with these awaited the orders of his sovereign upon the spot where at present rises the elegant column which Nicholas has in his fraternal piety erected as a monument to his brother and predecessor Alexander. The vast square extending before the winter palace was then covered with snow; and the horse looked a small troop in the midst of the wide white space. The speed with which Orloff brought this troop together for his master's service was a deed never forgotten by him.*

As he cast his eye towards the Admiralty and the statue of Peter the Great, Nicholas could see the eager crowd which pressed around the mutineers, and his ears were assailed with the incessant cry, echoed from the distance, "Long live the Emperor Constantine!" He felt that it was time to act.

The regiment of Preobrajensk, which had gained historic fame by its activity in putting down revolutions within the palace, and which, together with that of Semenoff, was formed by Peter the Great, received orders to send to the spot its first battalion: it obeyed

* The emperor conferred upon him the title of Count, which the famous Orloff had borne. "Wishing to recognise," says the imperial rescript, "the faithful conduct you pursued on the day of the revolt, when, following the impulse of your zeal, you performed a service equally important to the crown and to the country," &c.

with incredible speed; its third battalion was also sent, together with several companies of the grenadiers of Pavlofsk, and the sappers of the guard; the last were destined to reinforce the detachment of chasseurs of Finland, charged with the defence of the palace, in which were the two empresses and such of the other members of the imperial family as were then at St. Petersburg. In order to prevent an attack upon his residence, the Emperor Nicholas, taking with him the first battalion of the regiment of Preobrajensk, marched to meet the rebels, now reinforced by other detachments, and whose numbers amounted to from two to three thousand men.

He met on his way one of these detachments *en route* to join them. Advancing towards it, he addressed it with the ordinary salutation. By an old Russian custom, patriarchal in origin, the sovereign, or a chief of division, on meeting an armed force, exchanges with the soldiers a few words of greeting. The soldiers pronounce a response in rapid time and in chorus. As usual, the emperor cried, "Good day, my children!" ("Sdrastvonitic rebéti!) But instead of the usual reply, the soldiers answered, "Hurrah for Constantine!" Without allowing himself to be disconcerted, he pointed with his finger towards the extremity of the open ground: "You have mistaken your way," he said; "your place is there with the traitors." Another detachment whom he saluted remained stupified, and made no reply. With admirable presence of mind he seized the advantage, crying with his powerful and

sonorous voice, "To the right! March!" The soldiers obeyed mechanically, as if when they commenced their march they had entertained no other purpose.*

The barracks of the grenadiers were in the Grande Millione, situated between the winter palace and the so-called marble palace, but which, built for the most part of Finnish granite, presents an appearance as sombre as was that of its then proprietor, the Grand-Duke Constantine. Their colonel, Boulatoff, not having shewn himself among them according to his engagement, they made at first no hesitation in submitting to Nicholas, notwithstanding the remonstrances of their sub-lieutenant, Kojevnikoff. The soldiers saw that he was intoxicated, and attributed his representations and entreaties to his condition; nor did they place any obstacle in the way of his arrest. The ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance was gone through quietly, and the men went to dinner: yet they felt a sense of remorse, for some doubt yet remained on their minds. The lieutenant, Southoff, arriving at this time, achieved the work of re-persuading them.

"My children," he said to them, "you have done wrong; the other regiments have refused the oath, and are assembled on the space before the Senate-house; let us go to join them. Prepare and load your guns." He was obeyed; the whole company rose: in vain the commandant of the regiment sought to restrain

* Our zeal for truth compels us to call attention, in a Note (19,) in our Appendix, to an error in M. Custine's book, "La Russie en 1839," on this incident.

them, to keep them to their duty. "Advance!" cried Southoff: "follow me; I will not abandon you:" and he led them from the barracks.

The colonel immediately ordered out the entire regiment to pursue the rebels, and commanded them to load; but Lieutenant Panoff, who had been employed in going from company to company haranguing the soldiers, protested that they were deceived; that their credulity and weakness would expose them to the wrath of Constantine and to that of the entire army: "Let us fly rather to defend Constantine," he cried. Cruel uncertainty distracted the men, who were honestly anxious to do their duty, but who, ignorant and credulous, were more inclined to be led by their immediate officers than by their chiefs, whom they saw at a greater distance and before whom they trembled. Panoff, after a most persuasive address, precipitated himself into the midst of the column, crying loudly, "Hurrah for Constantine!" and succeeded in gaining over several companies to the rebels.

With these he marched to the space before the Senate House. Whilst on his way he determined to make an attempt upon the fortress, situated at no great distance, between the river and one of its arms. The leaders of the revolt would have taken an important step, if, instead of planting themselves before the Senate at the extremity of a vast plain, they had sought to gain this position. On the ground they had taken they were exposed to the bayonets of

the cavalry, and to the destruction of their shot; they could be easily surrounded, and had no point of support beyond the populace whom they hoped to excite. In the fortress the treasury is kept; there are also stored arms and ammunition, of which they needed a supply. Lieutenant Panoff had the greater hope of succeeding in his enterprise, because on that day the garrison of the fortress had been formed of two companies of his own regiment. But doubtless General Soukhin, the commandant, had received orders to be on his guard. On the approach of Panoff's men the sentinels stood on the defensive; the gates were closed; surprise was impossible. Panoff recrossed the main bed of the Neva, then covered with ice, so thick as to be as strong as a bridge. He arrived before the winter palace, which he hoped to carry by a *coup-de-main*; but advancing into the court-yard, and seeing the sappers drawn up in position, he conceived that his second scheme also was impracticable. He then directed his course towards the other rebels, whilst his men rent the air as they marched with cries of "Long live Constantine!" cries which were re-echoed by the rebel host. Another still more considerable reinforcement was added to their ranks; it was almost the entire of the marine guard, under the command of the naval lieutenant, Arbousoff, and Nicholas Bestoujeff.

The conspirators, as we have before observed, made their first appeal to the marines. Some of their officers had said to them, "Take the oath or not, as you please; we give you neither counsel nor com-

mand upon the subject; listen only to your own consciences!" These were insidious words, especially when addressed to men who have no other idea than that of obedience, and to whom the emperor is as God upon the earth; "the only man," as Castine has said, "by whom the people think, judge, and see; their intelligence and their conscience." Arbousoff, Nicholas Bestoujeff, and Rakhofski, who had joined this body, increased the excitement of the men, and on the arrival of General-Major Chipoff, they refused to take the new oath. The general caused the commanders of the companies to be arrested; but they were soon again set free by the other rebels. At that moment a cry arose, "Soldiers, do you hear those guns? it is your companions whom they are slaughtering." The men rushed to the gates of the barracks, and the efforts of some loyal officers, who sought to restrain them, were overpowered by the torrent. Though higher in rank than he, Nicholas Bestoujeff made over his command to Arbousoff; the marines followed their leaders, and many officers were borne along in the tumult. Arrived near the stables of the horse-guards, they saluted their companions, like themselves seduced, who were afterwards later to share their own unhappy fate. The cry now assailed their ears, "Form against the cavalry!" The regiment of Moscow had already taken up its position on beholding the horse-guards advancing under the conduct of their brave colonel.

The combat was in fact begun. The firmness of

Lieutenant Nassakin, who was in charge of the post, had defeated the attempt of the Moscow regiment to seize upon the senate-house. With a mere handful of Finnish chasseurs he had stationed himself under the main entrance porch, and for two hours bravely resisted the rebels by whom he was besieged.*

The revolted troops already found themselves without leaders. Of the three who were to have commanded them, Iakoubovitch alone was at his post. Prince Obolenski, indeed, was there also, but no special post had been assigned to him. Prince Troubetskoi and Colonel Boulatoff had neither of them appeared. The last named was indeed present, but lost among the spectators. Batenkoff had taken the oath, and the dictator allowed his fears to counsel him. Ryleïeff, still firm, had rejoined his friend Alexander Bestoujeff; he did not, however, remain a moment at his side: for not seeing Troubetskoi,† he went to seek him, lost much time, and appeared no more. But even had the presence of the leaders cast some show of heroism around this deplorable attempt, it is certain that it could not have changed the course of events.

The emperor was surrounded by troops and generals who were constant in their fidelity and zeal. His

* An act still more to his honour than this brave defence is recorded of him. The emperor having allowed him to choose his own reward for his heroism, he asked only the release of a prisoner, whose counsels he said had inspired his loyalty.

† Troubetskoi had vaunted in the morning, "It will be seen to-day that Russia can produce a Brutus and a Riego." He confessed, upon his trial, that he knew nothing of Brutus or Riego, except their names.

generals vainly solicited him to retire, and allow them to crush the insurrection alone; in that awful and critical moment he wished to prove himself worthy of the throne, not only by his courage, which never wavered, but by the greater quality of forbearance.

Anxious to spare the blood of his subjects, alike of those who were only misled and of those who were really guilty, he ushered in his reign by an act of generosity. He refused to quit the post of danger, but he requested the governor-general once more to address the rebels, and to recall them, if possible, to their duty. Count Miloradovitch advanced alone towards them, confident in the attachment which the soldiers had ever exhibited towards him. He expressed his astonishment at seeing warriors who had always been faithful now so far forget themselves as to resist their legitimate sovereign; his voice was drowned in cries of "Long live Constantine!" Obolenski dealt him a blow with his bayonet, which had no other effect than that of frightening his horse; but Rakhofski fired upon him at close quarters, and mortally wounded him. It was reserved for the hand of a Russ to give the death-blow to a countryman and a veteran, who had passed unscathed through fifty-six battles with foreign enemies. "Could I have believed," he said, as they carried him off the field, "that the hand of a Russian would give me my death-wound!"

The mob became more and more excited, and pressed around the armed rebels, every instant more decidedly taking part with them. One of them hav-

ing attacked an officer of high rank, received a sabre thrust from Colonel Anrep. At this time some subaltern officers came conspicuously forward.

Until now neither the officers, nor the conspirators in plain clothes, had ventured to pronounce the word *Constitution*, a word incomprehensible to the multitude, whether wearing beard and caftans, or with shaven chin and bearing arms: it was deemed that the moment was come for broaching it. To the cry, "Hurrah for Constantine" was added that of "Hurrah for the Constitution." The last word bears in Russ a feminine termination, *Constitoutzia*, and the ignorant men, who heard it coupled with that of Constantine, supposed it referred to his wife. The word *republic*, had it been pronounced, would not have been better understood. And the more reasonable cry which escapes in smothered sighs from many a Russian heart, "Triumph to the cause of law and justice, and down with absolutism!" would not, if uttered to that audience, have been more intelligible. Perhaps it is needless that a watchword should be perfectly comprehensible to those on whom it is to exercise its action; it may be that it exerts a greater power from being vague as to the idea it conveys, but it must seize the imagination in one way or other.

The shot which struck the brave Miloradovitch—the Russian Murat, as Segur calls him—had a powerful effect upon the emperor, and upon the generals who immediately surrounded him. A large portion of the force assembled was uncertain in its inclinations, and

exceedingly depressed, though as yet restrained by the oath, and by military discipline. "Are you quite sure of your troop?" a question proposed by a general to a colonel of cavalry about three o'clock,—at the moment when the troop was about to charge,—was one that might have been asked with respect to a large portion of the force assembled. It was, perhaps, only because the number of the avowed rebels was comparatively small, that the main part of the army, wanting courage to join the losing side, adhered to their fidelity. A large portion of the regiment of Moscow, who in the morning had given the initiative to the insurrection, were now concurring to the re-establishment of order. The Grand-Duke Michael returned that very day from the second journey he had undertaken to Warsaw, but which, as we have shewn, he pursued only as far as Dorpat. On receiving tidings of the insurrection, and being further informed that it was a regiment of his division that had taken the lead in it, he flew to the barracks of the division, which, though still rebellious, had been hitherto restrained by the urgent entreaties of some of its officers, harangued the soldiers vehemently, severely reproached them, and exhorted them to hasten to repair their fault; he succeeded in obtaining their oath, and led them to the emperor, who with such a reinforcement had sufficient strength, and only needed to utter the word of command to quell by force the anarchist rebels.

Still, however, he hesitated, reluctant to shed the blood of his subjects. Before resorting to so extreme

a measure, he wished once more to try persuasion. Again the insurgents were exhorted to submit, and assured that they could only secure their own safety by doing so. They refused to listen. Nicholas called upon the metropolitan to stand forth, and speak with the voice of religious authority in the ears of the misled men.

The feeble old man, almost seventy years of age, and the apostle of peace and unity, was little habituated to scenes so tumultuous as this. The cross shook in his trembling hands, as, accompanied by the learned Eugene, metropolitan of Kief,* and surrounded by a large body of the clergy, Seraphim appeared on the field of conflict to perform the duties of his holy office.

Was he not listened to? will be the thought of readers who, however little they know of Russian manners, have heard of the strong religious sentiment of that people, and of their lively attachment to the faith of their fathers. But though superstitious to the extreme, and paying every outward demonstration of respect to religion, the Russians, even of the lowest class, pay little deference to the ministers of worship, who indeed, are in general ill-suited to serve as patterns to the people. The appearance of the archbishop amongst them failed to produce the desired effect upon the soldiers. The priests, who surrounded the venerable old man, as they looked upon the infuriated countenances of the military and of the mob, exhorted him to prepare for the crown of martyrdom. Instead of

* The second prelate of the empire. He died March 7, 1837.

being heard with respect, he was insulted; his voice was stifled under the rolling of the drums; his hoary hairs were struck at, and he was asked, how "he presumed to meddle in such a case?"

He and his brother pontiff, seeing the fruitlessness of their effort, retired with their *cortége;* they were allowed to escape unscathed in person.

The emperor now, pale of countenance and saddened in spirit, saw that it was no longer possible to spare; forbearance had been carried to its utmost limits. At length he resolved upon decisive measures, now become the more necessary, because, says the "Report," "The dregs of the population, bribed by silver and brandy, which were lavishly distributed, began to join the rebels in considerable numbers.*

Nicholas caused them to be driven back on several sides; whilst a charge of cavalry broke into the square of the insurgents, within the centre of which they had drawn a body of the mob, who, like themselves, continually uncovered their heads, and uttered the cry, "Long live the Emperor Constantine!" Nicholas was filled with the deepest pity for the troops, who were seduced into acts of rebellion, whilst they were innocent of design; and even when he gave the order of attack to the horse-guards, and to the chevalier guards, he still desired that they should confine themselves, as far as might be, to a demonstration, and spare to the utmost possible extent. This kind of attack

* See Note (20,) in the Appendix, where we have extracted a passage from a journal made on the spot, on the morrow of the event.

was rendered extremely difficult by the want of space, and by the position of the rebels. The demonstration had not the desired effect. Perhaps it was made with too much hesitation. Perhaps the good will of the soldiers was wanting. Their leaders, on the imperial side, were certainly zealous. Amongst them, the young colonel, Baron Velho, distinguished himself considerably. He was the son of a Portuguese banker of that name, known under the reign of Paul. The rebels made a vigorous resistance. Prince Chtchépine-Rostofski gave the first order to fire; and in an instant the place resounded with the report of guns. Rakhofski, the murderer of Miloradovitch, fired at Colonel Stürler, a brave Swiss, who commanded the grenadiers; the colonel fell, and Rakhofski, as if in a fit of remorse, cast away his pistol. William Küchelbecker fell upon the Grand-Duke Michael, and such was the violence of his assault, that he would doubtless have killed him, but that some marines of the guard, horrified by his audacity, succeeded in covering their imperial master's brother. He then attempted to fire upon General Voïnoff; happily his piece, having lain some time upon the snow, flashed in the pan. The savage Iakoubovitch, sabre in hand, made great efforts to reach the emperor, but did not succeed in doing so.

The conflict had already lasted some hours. The insurgents, though they had no means of retreat, were favoured in their resistance by the position they had taken. Night, in that season and country, sets in before four o'clock; that hour approached; it was

deemed necessary to summon the cannon. Several field-pieces were placed near the boulevards of the admiralty, and were charged with shot. Before the mouths of these pieces the rebels were summoned to surrender; they boldly refused; the lighted matches were waved in the air in vain. The emperor's anxiety to spare life was excessive; at first one piece, designedly pointed so as to do little damage, was fired; the issue only drew mockery from the revolted troops.* It was thought that the fidelity of the artillery was doubtful; and it is said, that it was the Grand-Duke Michael, who, taking the match from the hands of a soldier, himself fired the first discharge.

The prince, though only just arrived from the fatigues of a long journey, to which were added those of his exertions in his visit to the barracks of his division, never left his brother for a moment; both he and the emperor gave proofs of most heroic bravery.

The fire was now serious; the shot committed horrible ravages, though there were only ten discharges in all. The "Report" asserts, that, on the second discharge, the rebels dispersed, and were pursued by the chevalier guards into the Bassili Ostroff, an island on the other side the river, opposite the English quay; from thence they crossed the river, and were driven down the English quay, and the long street, Galernaia, parallel with it. There the further progress of many

* Mons. Golovin describing this day, writes, "They drew along the cannon; a general brought cartridges in the boot of his carriage; the artillerymen refused to fire. He himself applied a match to the cannon; the insurgents were dispersed."

of them was stopped, and 500 prisoners were made on the spot. Numbers took refuge down bye streets, in houses, and upon the frozen bed of the river. A large number forced their entrance into a house not far from the senate, and were there hemmed in and taken; others falling in their flight under the guns which were fired upon them, strewed the streets with their corpses. Many escaped to a distance, and, reckless and hopeless, joined gangs of robbers. About 150 individuals were seized during the night, and many of the instigators of the revolt were arrested; some delivered themselves up to justice. The marines and the grenadiers repaired again to their barracks, and cast themselves on the mercy of the emperor whom they had braved.

The exact number of yictims has never been ascertained; for the bodies were collected with all possible speed and consigned to the waters of the Neva, cast in through openings in the ice, hewn for that purpose, and covered from all eyes by its thick crust. The most moderate calculations spoke of 200 killed, with 700 or 800 taken prisoners. Many persons present on the spot, simply from curiosity, or perhaps in the hope of pillage, were swept down by the cannon.

The empress, during the continuance of the conflict, surrounded by the most distinguished ladies of the city, tremblingly awaited the issue. At the moment when Nicholas found himself compelled to open a fire upon the rebels, he had sent a message to inform her of the sad necessity; for he feared the effect upon her

nerves, and wished to prepare her. When she heard the fire of the artillery, she cast herself upon her knees, bathed in tears, and remained in fervent prayer until they came to tell her that the revolt was crushed. At six o'clock the emperor hastened to her side; a sad duty had kept him till then away. As soon as he had perfectly re-established the public peace, he went to visit, upon his dying bed, the most illustrious victim of that terrible day, and to thank him for his loyal efforts, and for the last service he had rendered to his country, at the price of his blood.

When the emperor stood beside him, the Count Miloradovitch had but a few moments more to live; his sovereign received his dying wishes, and promised to see them executed.*

He left the death-bed to return to the palace and his family, and was still deeply moved when he reached them. An affecting scene ensued. With mingled feelings of grief, affection, and thankfulness the empress embraced him. "What a commencement of a reign!" both at the same instant exclaimed. Alas! he learned on the first day of his reign at what price sovereign power is purchased! His apprehensions for the future might well be great; for he had yet to learn whether the revolt was ended. But the presence of a wife, preserved to him amidst balls and poniards, was a balm and consolation to his heart. Thankfulness to God restored his calmness; but that day left its ineffaceable traces on the unhappy empress, then so

* See Note (21,) in the Appendix.

young, who, a tender wife and devoted mother, had seen herself at the same instant menaced in all her affections.

In the evening, a solemn *Te Deum* was sung in the chapel of the palace; the whole court attending.

The troops remained under arms, for it was apprehended that a *coup de main* might be attempted on the palace during the night. Every approach to it was guarded, as well those from the river, as on the land side; cannon were placed at every angle, and at the openings of the streets. Many regiments passed the night in bivouac, around huge fires, in the large open space before it, under the command of Aide-de-Camp-General Vassiltchikoff, who had already rendered great services, which were recognized afterwards in the imperial rescript, published 22nd of August, 1826. Another division was bivouacked on the Vassili Ostroff, under command of Aide-de-Camp-General Benkendorff, of whom we shall have to speak hereafter, and who, on the memorable day preceding this night, never for an instant quitted the emperor. The Cossacks of the guard traversed all parts of the city during the night, to maintain order, and to capture fugitives. Perfect tranquillity was preserved.

And where were now the leaders of the conspiracy, who had loaded their consciences with the blood of so many victims of delusion, and with the ruin of many excellent and worthy men, some of whom were fathers of families, and others the only supports of widowed mothers and orphaned sisters?

Ryleïeff had returned to his home; Alexander Bestoujeff, the Baron de Steinheil, Jean Pouschtchin, Batenkoff, and many others of his friends had followed him, to give vent, in his presence, to their rage, their shame, and their apprehension. Troubetskoi was not amongst them. That Brutus of a new order, that dictator, devoid of decision, firmness, and courage, had not appeared during the whole day. No sooner did open revolt commence, than, instead of assuming his post as agreed upon, he hurried to the military office, in front of the Winter Palace, to take the oath to Nicholas, in order to divert suspicion from himself, and to conceal himself from his accomplices, who would doubtless seek him on all sides. A severe nervous attack kept him some time at the office; no sooner had he recovered from it, than, stealing from observation, he went to take refuge in his sister's house, where the convulsions of his countenance betrayed the anguish that possessed him.

Seated with the Countess of Laval, his mother-in-law, a woman of firmer spirit than the pusillanimous conspirator, he exhibited the same spectacle. At length, imagining himself insecure in that house, he fled, under cover of the darkness, to that of his brother-in-law, the Count of Lebzeltern. He hoped, in the habitation of the representative of Austria, to find an inviolable asylum; in his terror he forgot that he left in his own, all his secret papers, which would fall into the hands of government agents, who, of course, would be speedily sent there. They contained

the proofs of the plot; more than enough to ruin his best friends, and all who had placed their confidence in him. These papers were seized; and, during the night, Count Nesselrode, minister for foreign affairs, repaired in person to the house of the Austrian minister, and requested him to persuade his brother-in-law to attempt no resistance to the will of his imperial majesty, but to repair immediately to the palace, under the conduct of an aide-de-camp, who had orders to require from him the surrender of his sword. The Count Lebzeltern deemed it expedient to submit; and the prince saw no alternative; he obeyed; was taken to the palace, and, having waited there a short time whilst the emperor took a brief repose, was conducted to his presence.

At first, he denied all connection with the revolt, and affected entire ignorance concerning the conspiracy. The monarch shewed him his own papers, and those of his accomplices, which had been laid before him. Some of them were written in Troubetskoi's hand; others bore his signature; and, in others, his name occurred in each sentence. Finding now that further denial was useless, he fell at the emperor's feet, craved his mercy, and prayed for his life.

"It is granted," Nicholas replied, with dignity, "Sit down and write to the princess: I will dictate the letter." Troubetskoi seated himself, and mechanically wrote as his sovereign dictated: "*Ja sdarof*, I am well;" but when he heard the further words: "*i ia boudou sdarof*,"—"and my life will be spared," he

hesitated. "Write and seal," cried the sovereign in an imperious tone; he trembled, and obeyed. The emperor then said to him, "If you have courage to support a life dishonoured and devoted to remorse, I grant it you, but it is all that I promise;" and having so said, his imperial majesty turned away in disgust.

CHAPTER V.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGN OF NICHOLAS, AND TIDINGS OF THE PROVINCES.

During the whole of the 27th of December a great concourse of persons were assembled on the wide open space which had been the scene of the preceding day's conflict. The space bears in its different parts the several names of the plain of the admiralty, the Isaac plain,* the plain of the senate, &c. The public tranquillity was not disturbed. It was curiosity which led the inhabitants to the spot where the struggle had taken place. Each desired to see the ravages which it had occasioned; to understand what had been the position of the troops; and to observe even the traces that they had left upon the snow.

At nine in the morning that wide space was still guarded as it had been during the night; the soldiers wore an air of melancholy: the cannon were pointed down the streets; the bivouac fires were burning; the Cossacks thrust back with their lances those whose curiosity pushed them beyond the prescribed limits.

* The Isaac plain is so named from the Isaac cathedral, which rises at one of its sides, and which has been more than half a century in building.

At that hour the emperor was seen to leave the palace, accompanied by a single aide-de-camp, like himself on horseback. The young monarch rode along the lines of the troops; thanked them for their fidelity and discipline, and for the exemplary order they had preserved in their ranks; he then released them from their duty, despatched them to their quarters and saw each company defile before him, having given orders for the distribution among them of meat, fish, and brandy. It had been usual at such junctures for emperors of Russia to distribute à largess in silver. On this occasion Nicholas departed from the practice, and instead of making a gift, caused the pay of the guards to be considerably increased for many ensuing days. He hoped by these means to confirm them in their loyalty. Having dismissed the troops he proceeded to the dwelling of Miloradovitch, but the count was no longer living. General Stürler also soon died of his wounds.

Notwithstanding the loss of these faithful servants, and all that he had suffered, Nicholas was disposed to clemency. He exercised it largely towards the unhappy soldiers, who, after having been seduced by the unworthy artifices of their superior officers, or led on by deference to the authority of their more immediate commanders, now waited, with that mingled anxiety and resignation so characteristic of the lower classes in Russia, till their emperor should decide their fate. To the marines of the guard, who exhibited marks of profound repentance, and who eagerly took the oath administered to them by the Grand-Duke

Michael, he at once granted a free pardon,—a step equally generous and politic (for where could he at a moment have replaced so many men!) Their colours, stained by the revolt, he caused to be consecrated anew; and restored them with his own hand with the words: "You have lost honour: seek to regain it!"

The colours had also been taken from two other regiments,—that of Moscow had refused the oath, but it had afterwards assisted, at least partially, in the re-establishment of order. Half the battalion of grenadiers had joined in the revolt, after having taken the oath of allegiance; but the other half, immoveable in their fidelity, had refused to listen to any suggestions; and those who had rebelled, now humble, contrite, and confessing their fault, invoked the paternal clemency of the czar. They found a warm advocate in the Grand-Duke Michael. Pardon was granted to all, under one condition,—that those who had been most active in the rebellion should be formed into separate companies, and should be sent for some time to join the army in the Caucasus, that they might wash away their fault, and the stain upon their colours, in the blood of those mountaineers who were the most bitter enemies of Russia. The proposition was received with enthusiasm. Hundreds of men declared themselves eager to go there, and redeem their character. The emperor promised to take care of their wives and children, and led them to expect their recall in a couple of years.

The same day a counter-order was sent to troops

who, cantoned at some distance from the metropolis, had been summoned to approach with speed. The dragoons of the guard, the Cossacks, and some hussars and lancers, were alone retained for the protection of the city, and to maintain a constant patrol, that none of the fugitives who yet remained secreted, waiting an opportunity of escape, should succeed in effecting it.* To this precaution the capture of the greater number of the leaders was owing. Very few of them escaped; perhaps, indeed, Küchelbecker was the only individual who fled. He had been formerly a pupil, and then a professor, at the lyceum of Tarskoi-Selo; he was learned, and a writer of some merit. His politics were extreme. Even in France he had drawn upon himself disapprobation by the ultraism of his opinions and the freedom of his speech. He had been permitted to deliver a course of lectures in Paris, on Russian literature; the complaints against him were, however, so strong as to cause its interruption, and to compel him to quit the country.

Having fought with audacious bravery during the insurrection, he succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the patrols, and reached Warsaw in disguise. In that city he attempted to find a political friend, an officer in one of the Russian regiments. Long he sought in vain; at length he addressed himself to a serjeant of the guard of Volhynia, who had received a

* Prince Odoefski had passed that December night hidden under the arch of one of the bridges; when he felt that the cold would be fatal to him, he took refuge with his relation, Souski, minister of the interior, where he was seized.

description of his person.—"And what may you want with him?" said the serjeant. Greatly confused, Küchelbecker exclaimed, "Holy Virgin! he is my friend." The suspicions of the serjeant, already awakened, were increased by the worn state of the clothes of the traveller. The Russian is suspicious, wary, and greedy of gain. The hope of recompense adds to the cunning with which he appears to be gifted by nature. The man, without allowing his suspicion to be perceived, promised to act as guide to the person whom Küchelbecker sought; he brought him, however, into the presence of his superiors. His identity was recognized, and he was reconducted to St. Petersburg. The serjeant who had entrapped him made the same journey, received the reward of 1000 rubles, was advanced to the rank of ensign, and placed in the invalids of the guard, for his "sagacious and exemplary conduct."*

The arrests, which had been commenced in the night, were continued through the day of the 27th, and were facilitated by the indications found in the papers of Prince Troubetskoi and his associates. They included a large number of persons, and left grave suspicion attached to still more. The fortress was crowded with prisoners; amongst them were sons of generals, high functionaries, academicians, princes, superior officers, civil *tchinovinks*, literati, &c., &c. Ryleïeff, Rakhofski, Obolenski; several of the brothers

* "Journal of St. Petersburg," 1826, No. 13. See Note (22) in the Appendix to this volume.

Bestoujeff, and Iakoubovitch, were already, with Troubetskoi, in its dungeons.

Alexander Bestoujeff had, during the night, quitted his place of refuge in the suburbs, and hastened, as he himself expressed it, "to carry his guilty head to the emperor." Colonel Boulatoff had also voluntarily surrendered himself.

The young monarch himself conducted their first examination. It was scarcely day when Bestoujeff found himself almost alone in his presence; he whose eloquent and persuasive words had led to revolt half a regiment, to which he was himself a personal stranger, stood petrified before the proud eye of the sovereign, as he addressed him with the words, "General Bestoujeff was a faithful servant, but he has left behind him degenerate sons." When the emperor asked him, "Where were you on the day of the 26th?" he replied, "Near your person, sire, and if you had shewn any weakness I should have taken your life; but whilst your majesty exhibited such heroic bravery, I could not pursue my guilty purpose."

"But," pursued the emperor, "for such an enterprize as you undertook large resources and much aid were requisite,—on what did you count?"*

"Sire, things of this kind cannot be spoken of before witnesses."

Without heeding the danger he incurred, Nicholas

* Bestoujeff gave these details to M. Adolphe Erman, who in 1829 visited him at Irkutsk. See "Reise um die Erde," t. ii. p. 270. Bestoujeff, the father, was councillor of state.

led the conspirator into a private cabinet, where they conversed a long time.

We are not informed whether Bestoujeff descended to the meanness of denouncing his associates; but it is sure that he expressed himself with perfect frankness, to which his august auditor replied by expressions of regret that such a man was lost to society. The colonel departed with tears in his eyes; the conference had the effect of making him feel the enormity of his crime.

The autocrat had listened to salutary truths, though painful to hear; he had, moreover, found the same truths dispersed through various papers of the conspirators which had been seized.*

The impotence of the laws, the venality of the judges, the corruption of which the highest functionaries were guilty, the unparalleled injustice committed of late years, the punishments arbitrarily inflicted without sanction of law, were all at once revealed to him, and shewed him an abyss under which it seemed almost inevitable that social order should be submerged.

All relating to the plot was fully revealed by these papers; nothing remained hidden. Its ramifications,

* Golovin reports a conversation which he asserts to have passed between the emperor and one of the conspirators. "What had your emperor done to you?" asked Nicholas of one of the conspirators, when he did them the honour to question them himself. "We had not one emperor, we had two," replied the prisoner; "one, your brother, the other Araktcheïff," and, as he was continuing in this strain, the Grand-Duke Michael present at the inquiry, cried out, "We must stop his mouth with a bayonet." "You asked just now," observed the accused man, "why we wanted a constitution. The reason is, that such things would not then be suffered to be spoken."

which extended over the whole empire, were exposed to view. From St. Petersburg general officers were sent to the army of the south, and to many points, to prevent a possible explosion. They were charged with the duty of hastily taking measures of security and precaution. Arrests were made; the captains of many regiments were changed; and several officers were charged to keep an eye upon their superiors, and to secure the obedience of the body of the army. Nicholas displayed extreme activity and vigilance. He was not eager to affix upon individuals imputations of guilt. Perhaps he had already discovered more than policy would permit him to avow. He manifested the utmost clemency, and pardoned, on the first sign of repentance, with a facility scarcely permitted to justice.

A young count, Zacharias Tchernycheff, captain in the chevalier guards, the joy and pride of an illustrious family, who had during the course of the 18th century numbered among them many ministers and field-marshals, was amongst those arrested.* The emperor desired to save him, from consideration to his family and on account of his extreme youth. He had not been involved in the conflict, but he had been drawn into one of the secret societies by his brother-in-law, Captain Nikita Mouravieff, of whom we shall have to speak presently. He was brought before the monarch.

* This family is now become extinct by the banishment of its last male member to Siberia, which is a civil death. The minister of war, Prince Alexander Tchernycheff is not of the same stock.

"Is it possible," said the emperor, addressing him, "that you should rest under a stain of the heaviest guilt and infamy! you who belong to one of the best families in my empire! I hope not. Disavow the principles you have professed; tell me that you repent the mad acts you have committed, and I will grant you a pardon." (In Russia the sovereign can extend pardon by an act of his will either before or after judgment.) Tchernycheff refused. "I have acted according to my conscience," were the few words that formed his entire reply.*

A veteran aide-de-camp general of the emperor, and commander of the first body of cavalry of reserve, himself brought his own son before his master, accusing him of being one of the conspirators. The monarch, touched by the fidelity of his servant, wishing to exercise clemency, said to his aide-de-camp that he left the punishment of his son in his hands. "If it be your majesty's pleasure to treat him favourably," replied the irritated father, "I pray you to put him under strict guard, else I shall kill him." Nicholas declared that he pardoned the offender, and interceded with his father to do so likewise. The inexorable old man replied, "Never."

In every case where the accused persons were not charged with serious guilt, the emperor followed equally the dictates of his own heart and of policy in granting a free pardon. On the 28th December, early in the

* He was exiled to Irkutsk, but received a pardon in 1829, and was sent to join the army of the Caucasus as a private soldier.

morning, a grandson of the great Suwarrow, only son of the Prince Arcadius and of the gifted Helen, (*née* Naryschkin,) was brought before him. His father had been drowned in 1811 at Rymink in Wallachia, celebrated for the victory won on its banks. The youth was a cornet in the horse guards. Nicholas was still in bed. Whilst waiting his summons the young man was kept in a small room of the palace, under the eye of two sentinels. At eight in the morning he was sent for. The antechambers were occupied by a vast number of aides-de-camp, generals, and colonels, who all supposing him guilty, affected not to know him. He was introduced to the emperor.

"Suwarrow, Suwarrow," cried he, as he stood before him, "is it thus you dishonour a name which all Russia reveres?" He was moved, and hardly gained courage to ask, "How have I merited such a reproach?" In fact, in his youth and inexperience, he had drawn upon himself suspicion, but no grave fact stood against him. The emperor pointed out the complaints that were made, and questioned him concerning his intimacy with the Prince Odoïefski. Suwarrow avowed that he had been on intimate terms with the prince; that at his house the discourse was very free, too free perhaps; but that never in his presence had anything been said disrespectful or hostile concerning his imperial majesty, for he avowed, "Never would I have suffered that." The monarch replied in a tone of triumph, "I should indeed say that a Suwarrow was incapable of betraying his sovereign!" He pardoned him his indiscretions,

embraced him, and sent him away an attached subject. As he passed again through the ranks of those who a few moments before had shewn him such cold countenances, each individual had suddenly become a friend; felicitations and embraces were proffered, but he stood aloof: he had learned a bitter lesson, and he proudly rejected the insincere homage. The following day he was named lieutenant, and soon after was promoted to the rank of *Flighel adioudant* (flying adjutant) to the emperor. His promotion was rapid. Since the year 1839 he has been major-general in the suite of his imperial majesty.

Strict investigation was immediately instituted; at a later page we shall arrive at its results; the commission appointed by the ukase of the 29th of December, to proceed with it, had only been two days sitting, when the emperor published his manifesto of the 31st,* with the design of re-assuring the public, with regard to the disposition of the army, that very important wheel in the social mechanism.

"Two classes of men," he declared, "have taken part in the insurrection of the 14th (26th) December, an event which, little important in itself, is highly so in its principle and consequences. The one class, misled, ignorant men, knew not what they did; the other, composed of rank conspirators, desired to annihilate the throne and the laws, to overturn the empire, and to introduce anarchy." "Drawn away in the tumult," continued the emperor, "the soldiers of the

* See the "Journal of St. Petersburg," 1825, No. 154.

companies seduced have neither participated in the crime by deed, nor by intention; strict investigation has given me the proof of this, and I regard it as a first act of justice, and as my highest consolation, to declare them innocent; the same justice forbids me to spare the guilty."

The paragraph which follows, deserves to be read with most serious attention. Coupled with some insinuations, not very flattering to foreigners, Russia might regard as a consoling promise, the passage, some words of which we quote in italics:

"The measures which have been already taken, together with the examinations, the judgments, and the steps which are yet to follow, will pursue to their full extent, and through all their ramifications—evils, the germs of which have existed for years within our country; and I am confident that they will destroy them to the very roots; they will purge the holy soil of Russia from foreign contagion; they will annihilate some *melancholy truths* and odious suspicions, which have estranged and afflicted noble souls; they will draw for ever a line of demarcation between the love of country, and revolutionary passions; between *the desire for improvement and the fury of radicalism;* they will shew to the world, that the Russian nation, always faithful to the sovereign and the laws, repulses the secret efforts of anarchy, as she repulses the attacks of open foes; they will shew how she purifies herself from such an evil; and will prove that it is not everywhere indestructible."

Notwithstanding the comparison, so little flattering to foreign countries, between the *sacred soil* of Russia, and their less hallowed ground,—the seat of an indestructible plague, which they have transmitted by contagion; countries, however, where, we venture to believe, the righteous power of law is not less firmly established than it is under the regime of ukase:—notwithstanding this little flattering comparison, we are bound to do justice to the calm and dignified language of this manifesto, and to its almost liberal spirit; since it recognizes the desire of progress as a legitimate sentiment. It does honour to the pen of the wise Karamzin, if it is true, as has been said, that it is to be attributed to him. Calculated at once to inspire agitators with salutary terror, to re-assure the peaceable populations of the empire, and to weaken abroad, the unhappy effect which the events of the last week might have produced, in regard to the political consideration of Russia; it is incontestably the production of a clever man, and a true statesman.

We shall, a little later, analyze the "Report of the Commission of Inquiry," but the manner in which it was formed first claims our attention. The list of its members will introduce us to some of the personages to whom the emperor accorded the largest measure of his favour; and, though individuals are nothing in Russia, with the exception of the individual who wears the crown, and who uses all others as instruments to work his will, or whom he breaks at pleasure, it may not yet be quite without interest, to pass in review the

immediate *entourage* of a monarch whose dispositions and character it is our object to study.

The following comprises the list of the members forming the commission. The minister of war, general of infantry, and president, Alexander Tatischtcheff; the Grand-Duke Michael, brother of the emperor, grand master of artillery, and commandant of a division of the guard; Prince Alexander Galitsin, now a privy councillor, minister of public instruction and of worship under Alexander, and under Nicholas minister of the posts; Golénitcheff-Koutousoff, aide-de-camp-general and military governor of St. Petersburg (afterwards he became a member of the council of the empire); Alexander Tchernycheff, aide-de-camp-general, the same who, after having rendered to the emperor the signal service we have recorded, became successively count, prince, general of cavalry, minister of war, &c.; Alexander Benkendorff, aide-de-camp-general, chief of the first division of cuirassiers; Levachoff, aide-de-camp-general, commandant of one of the brigades of light cavalry of the guard, a count, and member of the council of the empire; Potapoff, aide-de-camp-general, and general on the staff-major; and, finally, the secretary of the commission, Dmitri Bloudoff, then only councillor of state, but who has since run through a career of honour.

Though the greater number of these men were sufficiently eminent, and high in office, to guarantee their intelligence and impartiality, it was not perhaps to be expected that such persons would pursue a complete,

patient, and discreet investigation. In the first place all of them, with the exception of one member, and of the chief secretary of the chancery, were military men, whilst the subject for their investigation concerned the most complicated kind of high treason, widely ramified and spread, and involving much that was purely civil. Further, as aides-de-camp-general the greater number of these judges, *improvised* for the occasion, were courtiers, intimate friends of the emperor, the habitual and blind executors of his will. The emperors of Russia rely upon military force; by this, everywhere present, they reach all things; it constitutes their strength and their security. The aides-de-camp-general exercise a right of control over all the secondary and inferior authorities. To place so many of these in the commission of inquiry was not the means of assuring to justice that independence which is its first title to the respect of all men. But in this case old usages were followed; for in Russia the highest functions have always been reserved for the military, who are considered capable of every office, doubtless because they possess the merit of having well learned to obey.*

But further, it could not be other than highly objectionable to introduce into the commission a prince of the imperial family. It could not but give rise to a suspicion that he was placed there either to form a

* Golovin relates the following anecdote: — Count Pahlen having been appointed to a civil post, said to the emperor: "Sire, my life has been devoted to arms."—"And I," said the monarch, "had I ever meddled with politics when I mounted the throne?"

direct medium between the emperor and the commission, whose zeal he would stimulate; or at least to pursue in one way or other the punishment of the conspirators, in a matter which concerned in the closest manner the interests of his family. It was to cause him to descend from the high sphere in which his birth had placed him; for by his birth he was allied to that power which ought not to intermeddle personally in the administration of justice; or which at least ought to confine its interference to acts of clemency and grace. No answer can be given to these objections. The fact was, that under the critical circumstances in which he found himself, the monarch required to know all. The investigation to be pursued was likely to make discoveries of every kind, and there are truths that no Russian functionary, however highly placed, would dare to bring before the knowledge of his master, even though it were under a form strictly historical.

The Grand-Duke Michael had by his late conduct shewn himself a man to be counted on; not only had he given to his brother marks of the most entire devotion, and evinced a rare contempt of danger, but he had shewn surprising presence of mind, and had proved the union of humane sentiments with energetic firmness. The emperor owed him gratitude; he had moreover been brought up with him; he loved his rough uprightness and his military frankness; the wit of his sallies often amused him, and he repaid the sincere attachment of the grand-duke by an unlimited

confidence. Not content with confirming him in the functions which he had held before his accession to the throne, he did not allow much time to pass before he appointed him to the supreme command of the guard, an office in which he succeeded General Voïnoff, who, in his turn, had taken it from one of Alexander's favourites, General Ouvaroff, on his removal to the command of the fourth body of the army.

There were but two lawyers enrolled in the body of the commission, namely, Prince Alexander Galitsin, and M. Bloudoff; but advocates are seldom employed on Russian trials; besides, it was considered that this was a case purely political; and it was deemed that intelligence and plain good sense were all that could be requisite to establish the facts of accusation. Prince Galitsin, however, late advocate-general to the holy synod, a member of the council of the empire, and minister of public worship and education (a post created for him in 1816), was one of the most important men in the empire, and had a just title to the highest respect. His name upon the commission was a guarantee for justice. He had been a personal friend of the deceased monarch, he often enlivened him by the sallies of his vivacity, and was, like him, inclined to pietism. He had excited a little the distrust of the clergy placed under his direction, but never for a moment lost the confidence of his imperial master.

Nicholas was little more inclined than the Russian clergy themselves to that mysticism which was in vogue under Alexander, and which was at least pre-

ferable to the dry formalism of the eastern church; but without dwelling upon the religious tendencies of the prince, he only saw in him a capable statesman, an honest man, and a friend of his deceased brother, and he continued his confidence in him until the moment of his retirement from office.*

M. Bloudoff, neither a courtier nor a great lord, was a man of talent, who by dint of his own exertions directed his course towards power, or, to speak more correctly, towards the region where power existed, the sole heritage of one man. Distinguished by a vast amount of information, and especially by his knowledge of a considerable number of languages, and a man of close application and studious habits, he was almost a phenomenon in the chancery, and might count upon rapid advance. Karamzin, at that time the only Russian historian of any note, had, it is said, requested him to complete his work; when, stretched upon the bed of suffering, that remarkable writer was ordered to remit his labours and to go to breathe a softer air in the southern regions of Europe. On that occasion the Emperor Alexander, who felt the glory with which the new monument of its history would enrich his country, and desirous to do honour to its author, put a frigate at his disposal to take him where he listed. He could not avail himself of the imperial goodness; he never rose from his bed, and paid early the debt of nature. His unfinished work was carried

* The prince died almost blind on his estates in the Crimea in 1844. See Note (23) of the Appendix, where we speak of him and of the Galitsin family in general.

on by M. Bloudoff, with the aid of notes which he had left, as far as to the accession of the house of Romanoff.

Bloudoff, protected by Spéranski, had hitherto served in the college of the empire: now brought into notice by the report which he drew up in the name of the commissioners of inquiry, he saw himself appreciated; and since that date he has been in rotation colleague of the minister of public instruction, minister of the interior, secretary of state, head of the office for the promulgation of laws, and member of the council of the empire. This council forms, after the emperor, the highest authority in the country. It sets in motion the acts of the ministers, and holds them within the limits prescribed to them; it is moreover empowered to give promotion up to the second class of *Tchinn.** M. Bloudoff has been further invested with the title of count; and his function, together with grants made to him, have raised his fortune to the level of his position.†

Amongst the military members of the commission of inquiry, two individuals call for particular attention as destined to become the habitual instruments of the will of the new sovereign. We have already named them more than once.

One is Alexander Benkendorff, who had distinguished himself during the inundation of St. Peters-

* See Note (24) in the Appendix.

† He is now at Rome charged with a delicate negotiation between his master and the Papal See.

burg, and again on the day of the revolt, 26th December. Thus by his own merits recommended to the favour of his sovereign, he was further, as a relation of the venerable Countess de Lieven, entitled to consideration. That lady had directed the education of the emperor's sisters, and was highly appreciated by the imperial family.* Talented, gentle, insinuating in manner, and with advantages of person, Benkendorff had the art of making himself generally beloved, and the Russians even pardoned him the great crime of being a German.† He belonged to the nobility of Livonia. Having received the title of count, we see him later called to a post of the highest confidence, namely, that of chief of the *gens d'armes*, and head of that quarter of the metropolis surrounding his imperial majesty. As involving the guardianship of the sovereign an immense responsibility is attached to this post. Benkendorff felt its weight, and discharged his duties to the highest satisfaction of his master, until his death in 1844.

The second of the two generals to whom we wished to call particular attention is Alexander Tchernycheff, well known in France, where he was sent on a mission at the epoch of the Russian campaign, and where the treachery of Michael, who betrayed to him the posi-

* We shall speak again of this lady, who was subsequently created princess; but who must not be confounded with the Princess Lieven, sister of General Benkendorff, so well known in the diplomatic circles of Paris.

† See the spirited pamphlet, "La Russie envalué par les Allemands," Paris and Leipzig, 1844.—See also Note (25) in our Appendix.

tion and condition of the corps then ready to march upon the Niemen, and being detected, expiated his crime on the scaffold, made him a peculiar bud of promise. Tchernycheff was then only a colonel, but with the breaking out of the war he was made a general; he distinguished himself in several battles, and especially at the taking of Cassel, where his arrival caused the melting away of the fragile kingdom of Westphalia. We mentioned that an important mission was confided to him by General Diebitsch, at the moment of Alexander's death. Nicholas testified his gratitude for the manner in which it was executed; he attached Tchernycheff to his person, who soon made himself indispensable to his master. His fortune then grew rapidly: he was not of that noble family of Tchernycheff, whom the field-marshal had made celebrated, and one of whose members was in the ranks of the persons accused of conspiracy.* He was remarkably fruitful in resources, and the readiness of his mind sustained him in some difficult circumstances.

Such was the commission of inquiry to whom the emperor confided the secrets which the information afforded to them could not fail to reveal,—secrets of a delicate nature, for the most powerful families and the most eminent personages were compromised, and yet which policy might not proclaim, or even that the fact was so.

The duties of the commission consisted in examining, without exposing, a disease deeply seated, and of the

* We referred to this distinction a few pages back.

most deadly nature; in exploring a yawning abyss, which nevertheless was to be hidden from all other eyes; nay, of the existence of which, its very explorers were to lose the recollection, to become unconscious, so soon as their duties should be discharged. Now this being the office, it is easy to perceive the nature of the considerations which would dictate the choice of persons to fill it; and it may be conceived that tact, prudence, and discretion were qualities necessary to the members of the commission.

It sat down to its work, and there for a time we leave it, whilst we cast our eye upon the throne, again after a lengthened interregnum filled by its lawful heir. A reign is seldom commenced with great acts of justice; policy causes her voice to be heard, and its first hours are usually occupied by that interchange of demonstrations which establishes the relations between the prince and his people, inducing or repelling confidence, and determining opinion.

The young autocrat had passed with high honour through a most trying ordeal. After having set an example of noble disinterestedness when he might have seized at once upon the crown, he had shewn his humanity, together with his courage, in the repression of the revolt; and he had exhibited his clemency after the victory. The whole capital had been witness of his bravery, his forbearance, and his self-possession, inestimable qualities when united in a prince and exercised at such a crisis. By this display he had rendered essential services to the empire; for the re-

volt, had it not been so happily checked at its outbreak, might have led to incalculable consequences, especially if there be truth in the assertion that the conspirators had promised to the soldiers the pillage of the wealthy capital. All that part of the population termed *Tchornü harod*, or black people, excited by the influence of brandy, would have joined the soldiers, and the massacre of the numerous foreigners would have been an almost inevitable consequence.* The affluence of the Germans of St. Petersburg is a constant source of grievance to the miserable *mougik*, who, whilst he renders homage to their probity and intelligence, regards them as intruders who injure himself, and heartily, though secretly, hates them.

Prompt, decisive, and well concerted measures had saved the metropolis from such terrors. Then the public proofs which Nicholas had given of his gratitude and attachment to the faithful servant who had fallen a victim to his zeal, had proved to the people the goodness of his heart; and the army was deeply touched by the generous pardon granted to the poor soldiers, drawn, in spite of their own faithful principles, into crime.

His manifestoes, his speeches, his every-day words breathed goodness. A new era seemed to be promised, an era of justice, truth, and law. The monarch had already given an assurance that he would act only

* The "Journal of St. Petersburg" avowed that men unworthy of the name of Russians had meditated universal pillage and a common massacre.

under sanction of law, an assurance we believe sincerely spoken, but meaning little, in a country where the will of the sovereign *is* law, where that will, daily expressed in ukases, can be changed and revoked at pleasure by other ukases, and where moreover law, such as it is, has not for interpreters and ministers the blessing of a respectable body, whose uprightness can be impeached by none. Nicholas adopted the motto which Alexander had chosen,—*Zakoun, zalog blajenstra vsékh i kajedavo* (the law, the ark of safety for all and each), perhaps he hoped to convert that motto into a truth. He thought, doubtless, of some neighbouring states, where the will of the sovereign, nominally almost as absolute as in Russia, is yet far from being despotic, for old usages and customs based upon equity there give to law a character of sanctity. Absolutism has every where engendered abuses. In Russia these abuses had undermined the soil beneath the feet of the sovereign:—Nicholas, perhaps, had a sincere desire to abolish them. Be it as it may, the adoption of this motto, together with his promises that all matters of general interest should be published, and that the proceedings of the great state trials about to open should transpire, produced the happiest effects, and prepossessed the public in his favour. Men began to speak with admiration of a prince who had been hitherto regarded with indifference, not to say with dislike.

Assuredly, the youth of Nicholas had not betrayed to the knowledge of anybody his nobility of soul, his

superiority of intellect, or his force of character. Born on the 6th of July, 1796, only four months before the death of Catherine II., he received his education conjointly with the Grand-Duke Michael, under the direction of their mother. It was affected by the disadvantages of the age, which was one of continual agitation. He early displayed military tastes. He had, however, entered upon no profound studies, not even in the art of war, and his preceptors could not greatly boast of his progress in any. He had been placed under the direction of Matthew Lambsdorff, a noble of Courland. Gifted, as is his nation in general, with a capacity for quick imitation, he was more ready in mimicking the personages about the court in voice, mien, and air, than in seizing upon scientific distinctions, or penetrating the senses of Greek and Latin texts. The two young princes encouraged each other in a thousand boyish pranks. However, Nicholas studied with success, both the military art, and some of the modern languages. He moreover displayed a taste for music, and himself composed some marches of sufficient merit.

His extreme youth forbade his participating in the important contest, which agitated Europe for so many years. He saw, with intense admiration, the part which his brother and sovereign took in it; and regarded him almost as a king of the heroic ages. After the establishment of a general peace, he journeyed to gaze upon the battle-field, where the Russian troops had distinguished themselves; visited several

capitals; and made a short stay in Paris, and also in England. On his return to his own country, he ran over its principal cities; and he was yet a youth, when Alexander agreed with Frederick William III., to marry him to the eldest daughter of that excellent friend and ally.

Russia had never before carried her matrimonial pretensions so high; for, requiring the princesses whom she adopts to renounce their form of Christian faith, and to accept her own, she limits her power of choice; and this somewhat hard condition is not reciprocal; the Russian princesses, married to foreigners, do not renounce their communion with the eastern church. The Catholic courts have been usually little disposed to subscribe to the condition; and it was scarcely to have been expected, that such a concession should be made by the most powerful Protestant king of Germany: a prince personally pious, and sincerely attached to the particular form of his own church. Yet he did not object, and the marriage took place.

In the ceremony by which the daughter of Frederick William III., was received as a member of the Greek church, she changed her name of Louise-Charlotte, for that of Alexandra Fœdorovna,* borrowed from the god-father, and her own father. The marriage was celebrated, to the satisfaction of the two courts, on the 13th of July, 1817, on the anniversary

* Alexander stood godfather, and the Russian translation of Frederick is Fœdor. Of the Princess Louise-Charlotte, we shall have to speak in the latter part of our work.

of the princess's birthday: she was 19, and her husband two years older.

The most perfect union has blessed this truly happy marriage. The birth of an heir, in its first year (the 29th of April, 1818,) strengthened its ties. A letter which, at that time, the happy father wrote to Augustine, archbishop of Moscow, is one which history ought to preserve.*

This fortunate union had, doubtless, a favourable influence on the development of the faculties of the prince. His domestic bliss could not fail to make the best impressions on a heart naturally good, though not generally much inclined to sensibility. Satisfied with his private comfort, he exhibited little more inclination than did his brother Alexander, for the splendours and *fêtes* of a court; he escaped them as far as his elevated position would permit, pleading the duties of a husband and father. True affection and excellent order reigned in the palace of Anitchkoff. Nicholas and Alexandra read much together, and their studies formed the subject of mutual communication and improvement.

The public knew none of these things; they judged the grand-duke chiefly from his extreme precision about trifles connected with the troops in the garrison of St. Petersburg, whom he inspected; and were by no means disposed to attribute to him the maturity and wisdom which the government of a great empire demanded. The surprise and pleasure, which the early

† See Note (26) of the Appendix, where we give it.

display of his superior qualities occasioned, were equal; and the admiration which was accorded him was sincere and deep.

The noble stature of the prince; his majestic mien; his air, somewhat reserved and constrained, but martial and dignified; his intelligent eye; his expansive brow;—circumstances observed and appreciated by the multitude, and not without effect also on the penetrating and discerning, especially when united with activity and energy of mind;—contributed to increase this admiration. But the masculine beauty of Nicholas was not then so perfect as it has since become. Increased age has improved his figure, given expression to his features, and imparted to him that general ease which accompanies the habit of command. At that time, his physiognomy had something harsh in its expression; his manner was rough, and his expression dry and laconic. Yet those who knew him best, were charmed with his frankness, the acuteness and clearness of his intellect, his well-chosen language, and powerful voice.*

The *bourgeoisie* of the metropolis learned, with lively interest, that this accomplished military cavalier inclined also to civil occupations, and that he was acessible to all of every degree. He was met constantly, alone with the empress, in a sledge, drawn by one horse, without escort, and even without servants,

* This portrait may be compared with what Custine says in his work on Nicholas, vol. i. p. 315, *et seq.* See also Note (27) in the Appendix to our own work.

followed perhaps at some distance, but with no apparent retinue.

One of the early days of January, the merchants saw him unexpectedly appear upon the exchange, and speak with even the most retiring individuals amongst them, with an affability which won all hearts. Standing before the bust of Alexander, in the great hall, "Gentlemen," he cried, "let us never forget this man, who was equally your benefactor and mine!" When quitting the place, he said to the persons who surrounded him, "My friends, give me your affections; for I love you, and that from the depths of my heart." So indefatigable was he in his attention to business, that he actually *grew* to it, and was often seen with eyes reddened from lassitude. He was determined to examine all for himself; he visited the establishments, often arriving there suddenly, and at hours when no preparations could possibly have been made. He was evidently animated by the best intentions, and appeared to act by inspiration—at least, so thought the religionists of Russia; and all Russians who are not changed in very nature by civilization, are religionists. This idea caused him to become, in their eyes, the elect of providence—whom, think they, the sovereigns of this earth typify and represent below.

In order more nobly to fulfil this lofty vocation, in Russia, as in other countries, newly made sovereigns signalize their accession to the throne by an act of clemency. Nicholas was careful not to deviate from so impressive a custom. "Considering," he says

in his manifesto, signed the first day of the year 1826 (old style), "the right to forgive as the noblest of the prerogatives attached to the power which we hold from God, we resolved in our heart, from the moment of our accession to the throne, to look upon this power as a deposit which divine Providence has confided to us, and to exercise it in all its plenitude, so far as may be consistent with the general welfare, yet never deviating from those principles of justice upon which thrones rest, and upon which the prosperity of empires depends."*

In the position, however, in which affairs then stood, a common pardon could produce but little effect, if it did not apply to the authors and abettors of the last conspiracy, or at least to their victims, those young men, for the most part of good family, who had been led into crime by rashness, or false enthusiasm, by the exactions of "the fashion," so to speak, and by that rage for imitation from which Russia has never been able to defend herself. But policy would not allow this: with respect to the private soldiers, poor misled creatures who acted under the control of others, it was considered possible, but it would have been imprudent to extend it to the officers and men of every rank who had enjoyed the benefit of education. Their crime could not be allowed to remain unexpiated; justice had been outraged, and she must now be left to follow her own course freely.

* See the "St. Petersburg Journal," 1826, No. 1.

The manifesto of pardon, therefore, was almost unfelt. The imperial clemency was exercised in favour of several ranks of criminals, debtors to the state, and rate-payers in arrear. Remission of the last year was made to the latter if they had allowed several years' poll-tax, land-tax, spirit-tax, or tax for the repair of roads to accumulate. To the former, if the credit of the state did not exceed the sum of 2000 rubles, the emperor made the same remission, ordering all prosecution to cease, and commanding that those should be released who were imprisoned for a sum either originally less than that or reduced to it by payments already made. This was a considerable sacrifice imposed upon the royal treasury at a time of great and unusual expenditure, resulting in the first place from the numerous demands of a new reign, including the coronation, which was already talked of, although the time for it was not yet fixed; in the second place, from the extensive law proceedings to which the discovery of the conspiracy and the open revolt which had just taken place had given rise; then again, by the police measures which this state of things imperiously demanded, in order to ward off similar catastrophes for the future; and finally, by the conveyance of the remains of the deceased sovereign from one extremity of the empire to the other, and by the pompous obsequies prepared for them.

As to the criminals, those who had been condemned prior to the 1st of December, 1825, "to pass under the hands of the executioner, and to compulsory la-

bour in exile," were exempted from the former punishment, so that they had only to endure the compulsory labour: those who had been sentenced to corporal chastisement and banishment to Siberia were released from the former, but suffered the latter penalty.

It will be observed, that the imperial pardon related only to individuals condemned prior to the commencement of the new reign. It did not apply to political crimes or offences, nor did it even extend to prisoners of state, often unjustly condemned, of whom more than one sighed in the fortresses and distant garrisons independently of the recently arrested conspirators. These latter were so numerous that they encumbered the prisons, and all the dungeons of the citadel: new prisoners were daily brought under the guard of Cossacks, in *kibitkas*, too slightly covered to protect them from the cold during a long journey across immense plains of snow.

Let us now turn our attention to a policy, the spirit of which had already begun to animate the new reign. With respect to international interests, Nicholas announced to every court, that following to the utmost of his power in the footsteps of the sovereign whose loss he deplored, he professed the same fidelity to engagements contracted by Russia, the same respect for all rights consecrated by existing treaties, the same attachment to the conservative principles of general peace and to the ties which united all powers.

Nothing was, of course, finally determined as yet, in the direction of internal affairs, except the extirpation

of the abuses discovered in so unexpected a manner. In the first place, it was necessary to triumph over the extreme perplexity of the moment. Nicholas, with a precipitance which the circumstances excused, had declared that he intended his reign to be a continuance of that of his brother and predecessor; a promise to which he did not remain faithful, but which, being made in sincerity, must necessarily have influenced his first determinations. The greater number of the ministers in office, therefore, were retained for the first year, notwithstanding the reports of impending changes, which, as in the commencement of every reign, were not slow of circulation. In Russia, however, these appointments are of much less importance than in other countries, where each political system has its representatives, and where the names of the candidates for power are always more or less significant. Amongst the Russians such *names*, as illustrating a course of policy, are rare; and even the union of those of Woronzow, Spéranski, Kotchoubeï, or Vassiltchikoff, Kisseleff, Perofski, Jermoloff, or Paskévitch, in the same ministry would not be sufficient to announce an assured change of system.

Under an autocratic government the sovereign is all in all: his empire extends even to the thoughts and opinions of his subjects. The ministers, particularly those for foreign affairs, are little more than his clerks, and are besides controlled and confined within a certain limit by the council of the empire, a superior power well instructed as to the extent of the emperor's will

and pleasure. This restriction is of more importance than may at first appear: for not only can the monarch at will make the vote of the minority of the council prevail against that of the majority, but he can even reserve diplomatic affairs wholly to himself. Strange that the empire's council should not be the centre of its policy!

Alexander had always personally directed the foreign affairs of Russia: Nicholas did not fail to imitate his example in this respect. Count Nesselrode, a man of moderate talent, but pliant and dexterous, well prompted with advice in secret, and too good a courtier not to change his system whenever circumstances required it, was in possession of the department called the College of the Empire.

He had been one of the chiefs of the college since the year 1815, and had remained alone at his post since the retirement of his colleague, Count John Capo d'Istrias, a man of less yielding disposition, but of far greater elevation of mind.

The friends of Capo d'Istrias spoke of his noble character with the warmest admiration. Sprung from a poor, although aristocratic family, his merit alone had enabled him to pave his way to power, and in November, 1815, he had been appointed secretary of state to share the labours of the emperor's cabinet with M. de Nesselrode. Alexander was attached to him: he esteemed him as a man of probity, and took leave of him with regret, on a temporary separation at a time when Austria had stifled in the monarch's breast all the

generous sentiments with which the misfortunes of Greece had at first inspired him.*

Count Nesselrode had always been more facile; contenting himself with an inferior place, he was satisfied to become a meer tool, the representative of his master's political system, and not of his own: he kept silence, too, when, after the revolution of 1830, Nicholas, irritated at the sympathy of France for Poland, assumed an attitude towards King Louis Philippe as undignified as it was unfavourable to the interests of his empire.

With such a character, M. de Nesselrode did not find it difficult to retain the department of foreign affairs, notwithstanding the prejudices of the Russian people, who mistrust him as being a foreigner,† and upbraid him with his preference to strangers. And, indeed, the most distinguished names in the Russian diplomacy of the last thirty years are those of Pozzo di Borgo, Lieven, Oubril, Ribeaupierre, Brunnow, Meyendorff, Suchteln, Nicolaï, &c., while the only true Russian names we can oppose to them are those of Tatischtcheff, Boutenieff, and a few more.‡ However that may

* When Capo d'Istrias, appointed President of the New State, set out for Greece, he wrote to a pastor at Geneva, "I ask you for a man who resembles yourself, and who can and will partake my lot, that is to say my labours and my poverty."—See "Le Comte J. Capo d'Istrias, jugé par luimême," Paris, 1842, p. 28.

† He belongs to a very ancient Westphalian family, possessing the title of Count of the holy empire. His father, however, was in the Russian service. The count himself was born about the year 1780, on board an English ship in the harbour at Lisbon. Pope Gregory XVI. wittily said of him that he represented a quadruple alliance.

‡ At the commencement of that period the Rasoumoffskis, the Wo-

be, Nesselrode was the man of traditions, and as such valuable to the young monarch, whose inexperience it was hoped he would supply without attempting to influence his views. Nicholas not only retained him, but in 1828 changed his modest title of minister directing the department of foreign affairs to that of vice-chancellor, and, finally (March, 1845), raised him, to the distinguished rank of chancellor of the empire, vacant since the death of Count Nicholas Roumantsoff, the Mæcenas of Russia, son of the conqueror of the Turks, and known also as the counsellor for the crown, and for his attachment to the French policy.

All the ministers have not direct communication with the emperor; he admits to this honour those only whose reports interest him the most: the rest, including the Secretary of State, merely send him their reports and papers.

Next to that of foreign affairs, the department to which the emperor personally devotes the most of his time and attention is the military. This department was directed for the first three years by the general of infantry, Alexander Tatischtcheff, to whom the emperor entrusted it until September, 1827, when it was transferred to Count Tchernycheff.

Tatischtcheff, although less distinguished than the judge of that name, the ambassador from Russia to Vienna, was an upright, able, and laborious man. He might indeed have been reproached with having fos-

ronzows, the Markoffs, the Kourakins, the Italiuskis, and many others might have been mentioned.

tered the dangerous principles which prevailed in the army; but had not the Emperor Alexander himself contributed still more to diffuse liberal opinions amongst the young officers? Nor was the ministry at that time what it became after the death of the Baron de Diebitsch, who was head of the staff, in which capacity he had the direction of the military finance. He was also governor of the military colonies after the retirement of Araktchéieff, Alexander's favourite, whose reign ended with that of his master. The military administration then was divided. Under Nicholas, as well as under his brother, Diebitsch enjoyed deserved favour: he remained at his post, and it was not until the Polish campaign in 1831 that the imperial feelings were changed towards him. He died of cholera the same year.

Although the pupil of Henry Storch,* a skilful economist, (whose printed course of lectures has given to the public the lessons he imparted to the two younger sons of Paul,) Nicholas was no doubt but little familiarised with questions of finance. But these matters touched his gravest interests too nearly not to oblige him to take an active part in them when he ascended the throne. The monarch accustomed himself to labour diligently and frequently with General (since Count) Cancrine, who was at the head of the financial department. This minister became his master in this department, as Spéranski was, it is

* Storch died Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg 13th November, 1835.

said, in legislation. It would have been impossible to entrust this department to more skilful heads.

Like M. de Nesselrode, Diebitsch, and all the brightest stars of the Russian administration, Cancrine was a German;* but he was a German of the old school, laborious, well-informed, even learned, recalling the idea of the old student of Giessen, become the intendant-general of an army. He was a man of superior mind and strong understanding, a determined will, tried integrity, as rigid towards others as towards himself, and yet sufficiently yielding to preserve his favour with the autocrat. Unfortunately, his principles were tinctured with scepticism, that great scourge of our era.

Until the year 1823 the finances had been but indifferently administered by Count Dmitri Gourieff, whom the protection of the Chouvaloffs probably, rather than his own merit, had raised to a post so difficult in a country whose still feeble resources are called upon to support the highest pretensions.

Under General Cancrine, who, we have said, had until that time been intendant-general of the army, all wore a new aspect, although the prohibitory system, already two years in force, (1821,) was in full vigour. Great activity soon animated all the branches of the social economy; progress was manifested throughout,

*. He died, a year after his retirement, the 21st September, 1845. He had only a few days previously received the first printed copy of his book, still almost unknown in France, "Die Œkonomie der Menschlichen Gesellschaften." The Economy of Human Societies, Stutt., 1845. We shall devote a distinct notice to this skilful financier.

and the sources of the public revenue became more abundant.

This is not the place to examine into the financial system of this minister, or to determine whether the title of "the Colbert of Russia," which has been bestowed on him, has a prospect of being confirmed by time,—that touchstone of all renown; but so much of progress and improvement attaches to the name of Cancrine, that he appears destined long to survive his decease in public favour. Yet, without failing in respect for his memory, we may be allowed to question the expediency of attempting to augment the public revenue by a duty on brandy, this high impost forcing the diffusion amongst the people of floods of a pernicious beverage, the passion for which was as general and ardent as it was degrading.*

Unfortunately, this increase was requisite: the balance of receipt and expenditure constantly threatened to preponderate on the wrong side, and the empire's treasury no longer corresponded to its political greatness. Cancrine found the remedy: during twenty years of his administration the revenues of the state are said to have increased by 160 millions, that is to say, by more than a third of the total, and they are now more than 500 millions of francs. Although this is less than half the public receipts of France, it is nevertheless an enormous sum when compared

* The revenue arising from the duty on brandy, which, before 1806, was twenty-four roubles (then nearly the value of 1*s.* 11*d.*), was more than 2,666,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, in 1825. In 1844 it amounted to 5,333,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

with the state of the Russian finances fifty years since.*

A commission of control had formerly been appointed in favour of the Baron de Campenhausen. This was equivalent to a ministry, and held the place, very imperfectly no doubt, of the French useful Court of Accounts (*cour des comptes*). This post had remained vacant since the death of the first occupant. Nicholas, probably by the advice of Cancrine, appointed the Senator and Privy Councillor Hitroff to it.

Vice-Admiral Möller remained provisionally at the head of the marine department, directing it altogether in default of a minister; and although quite unfit for the office, the Privy-Councillor Lanskoï was continued in the ministry of the interior. He, however, according to an old custom revived on this occasion, had a colleague (*tovarischtch*) given to him† in the person of Dmitri Daschkoff. The like would readily have been done for the head of the judicial department, Prince Labanoff-Rostofskoi, an officer holding the rank of general of infantry. Generals are daily called to take their seats in the senate, the high court of appeal and administrative justice, and no one thinks it strange that the president of this body, the minister of justice, should bear martial epaulettes. We have already said

* See Note (28), at the end of this volume.

† Formerly the title used was *pamoschtchik*. The successors of M. Lanskoï were General Zasefski, M. Bloudoff, Count Alexander Strogonoff, and the Senator Perofski (Leon Alexéievitch). The latter, raised to the office of minister of the interior in 1840, soon threw all his predecessors into the shade. He is a man of integrity, talent, and activity.

that they are worn even by the attorney-general, who represents the emperor in the synod. Nothing is more common in Russia than this confusion of the functions of the civil and military orders. The prince was old and infirm, and a colleague appeared necessary for him. He was spoken to on the subject, but he would not consent to such an arrangement, choosing rather to resign his power than to share it. He continued his duties until the year 1827, when a temporary leave which he had for the restoration of his health was, after a few months, converted into a very honourable dismissal. His successor was Prince Alexis Dolgorouki, formerly civil governor of Moscow, a man of activity; but he was soon called to another post,* and resigned his office to Dmitri Daschkoff,† who has been already mentioned.

In the department of public instruction, that of all others perhaps which requires most talent and activity in its director, Admiral Chischkoff, the successor of Prince Alexander Galitsin, in 1824, was delayed to be appointed for some time. He was a hale old man,‡ learned, and, in particular, well versed in the Russian language, which he studied as a curious

* He died, a privy councillor and member of the council of the empire, 4th September, 1834.

† He died, a member of the council of the empire, 8th December, 1839. Before he was appointed a colleague of the minister of the interior, and titular of the ministry of justice, he had been councillor of legation at Constantinople. M. Golvolin assures us that he made it a duty not to *importune* the emperor. He must not be confounded with M. Woronzow-Daschkoff.

‡ He re-married in 1826, and died the 10th April, 1841, aged eighty-seven.

etymologist, but was nevertheless indifferent to the diffusion of knowledge, and an illiberal critic. It was considered necessary that he should have a colleague; he himself proposed M. Perofski, curator of the University of Kharkoff, but he was obliged to accept M. Bloudoff, a man of talent, with whom our readers have already made acquaintance. It is now almost the rule that each minister shall have his colleague or assistant.

The position of the latter is subordinate. He does not take a seat in the ministerial council except when he replaces his superior in case of absence or illness, or in a few particular cases. The great age of Admiral Chischkoff made him retire from office in 1828. He was succeeded, first by Prince de Lieven, and then by M. Ouvaroff (now count*). It is well known that the latter is a man of taste and talent as well as a courtier, compounded of the words *autocracy* and *nationality*, a motto which pleased the emperor, and was well suited to its purpose. He still occupies the same post, and perhaps we may soon find an opportunity of shewing that we appreciate his system, and the advantages which have resulted from it.

Finally, Count Gourieff, formerly minister of finance, joined, at the time of Nicholas' accession, the management of the affairs of the imperial house to the department of appanages, of which he held the administration for the first time in 1806. But his death (1826) gave rise to great changes in this double

* Assistant in 1832; minister in 1834.

administration; which was destined for Prince Peter Volkonski, who was created minister of the imperial house the 3rd September, 1826.* At the commencement of his reign the young emperor wrote to him to Taganrog, offering him this office as a reward of his services, not knowing that this faithful friend and servant of Alexander had promised not to leave the empress Elizabeth until he had brought her back to court. When he received the prince's answer, however, Nicholas naturally respected the sacred mission which had devolved on him, and which he fully accomplished, with respect at least to the mortal remains of Elizabeth; for before they had travelled half the distance between Taganrog and St. Petersburg, exhaustion obliged the empress to stop. It was the will of Providence to recall to himself her weary and suffering soul. The friend of Alexander was then free to accept a task which brought him into near connection with state affairs, and he became one of the intimate councillors of Nicholas, whose court and household he governed and still continues to govern in a spirit of extreme economy, and sometimes even of parsimony, if our information be correct. No one, we are assured, is more disposed than this minister to counterbalance the German influence by the Russian, which is, however, often incompetent to surmount the difficulties opposed to it. Nor can the German influence be said not to be legitimate, in a country

* See the ukase of the institution of this ministry, in the "St. Petersburg Journal," 1826, No. 110.

of which the Baltic provinces form a part; and it is besides rendered valuable by superiority of intellect and fitness for labour. On the 1st January, 1838, the direction of the appanages was detached from this ministry and formed into a distinct one, under the title of the department of the crown domains.

A great project, the amelioration of the condition of their serfs, and their ultimate freedom, gave rise to this creation; and, to encourage it, the emperor did not hesitate to summon to the direction of this ministry one of the most liberal-minded men of the empire, well known by his government of Moldavia and Wallachia, General Count Paul Kisseleff.*

We shall say nothing of the direction of public works, then entrusted to Duke Alexander of Wurtemburg, the emperor's uncle, the same who besieged Dantzic, in 1813, as we have before related. This ministry has assumed a greater degree of importance under General (now Count) Kleinmichel, formerly Lieutenant of Araktchéieff, in the government of the military colonies, yet not admitted to such honour with regard to pressing political emergencies.

With respect to the general administration, all remained for the present unchanged. The government

* M. Golovin (p. 227), a liberal and patriotic man, has made himself the organ of the discontent of the aristocratic party, by writing the following passage on the subject of Count Kisseleff:—"He is thought to be the emperor's most dangerous enemy, so greatly do his measures appear calculated to produce discontent and even to lead to revolutions." The Count's brother, M. Nicholas Dmitriévitch, has been the Russian ambassador and chargé d'affaires at Paris since the recall of Count Peter de Pahlen in 1842.

had too many urgent affairs already on its hands, to be tempted to create new difficulties.

But it was thought impossible to multiply sufficiently devoted instruments, chosen from amongst the generals and superior officers, who form the immediate circle of the emperor, carry his orders, and superintend their execution. Hence arose a number of new appointments in this formidable staff, one of the chief supports of the autocracy. We have already spoken of this legion of aides-de-camp, and aides-de-camp-general, who thronged the palace, together with chamberlains and gentlemen of the chamber. The latter *cortège*, however, though increased to the same ostentatious extent, was less injurious to the treasury; for embroideries and badges of office were, in general, a sufficient recompense to the vanity of its members, and the crown lands, enjoyed either temporarily or for life, were the share of but few. From the very commencement of his reign, Nicholas thus attached to his person more than fifty officers,* either by way of reward for their own, their fathers', or their relatives' services, or merely to accomplish the object of surrounding himself with men on whom he could depend, and grouping around him, as it were, a nursery of agents, always ready to second his policy and to fulfil, in every country, the missions with which he should entrust them. The number of superior and general officers forming part of the emperor's military establishment is not less than a hundred and twenty.

* See Note (29).

Too many proper names, perhaps, have already been mingled with our history, and yet we have but cursorily named many men who were destined to be the chief supporters of the new reign, Michael Spéranski, Victor Kotchoubeï, Michael Woronzow, Hilarion Vassiltchikoff,* the brothers Charles and Christopher de Lieven.

The progress of events will recall our attention to them, either in the present narrative or in the publications by which it may be followed. For the present, we shall confine ourselves to mentioning a few more appointments, made in favour of men already in possession of the emperor's confidence, or destined afterwards to enjoy it.

The *cordon bleu*, or order of St. Andrew, the highest Russian order, was conferred on Prince Dmitri Galitsin, general of cavalry ; and on Count Peter Tolstoi, general of infantry : the former† was governor-general of Moscow, and was a skilful, enlightened, and prudent ruler, enjoying the highest consideration as a man of established character ;‡ the latter, invested at that period with the command of the 5th corps of the army, and

* He was mentioned in the preceding chapter. He was invested with the Order of St. Andrew in 1826, at the coronation, created count in 1831, prince in 1839, and in 1838 president of the council of the empire. It is said that he is the one to whose advice the emperor listens most willingly. His brother, Alexis Vassiliévitch Vassiltchikoff, is privy councillor, senator, marshal of the government of Pskoff, &c.

† See the edict addressed to him by the emperor, in the "Petersburg Journal," 1826, No. 31 ; and the notice of the family of the Galitsin princes in the Notes and Explanations. Prince Dmitri died at Paris, the 8th April, 1844.

‡ See Note (30).

since created president of the department of military affairs in the council of the empire,* was a soldier of acknowledged loyalty, and was chosen by the emperor, in 1838, to assume the government of St. Petersburg and Cronstadt, during his own absence.

The *cordon rouge*, or order of St. Alexander Newski, was conferred upon the Lieutenants-General, and Aides-de-Camp-General Alexander Benkendorff, of whom mention has been already made; Count Kemmerofski, commandant of the corps of the interior guard,† (now general of infantry and senator,) Zarefski, governor-general of Finland, (since temporary minister of the interior,) and Baron (then Count) de Toll, head of the staff of the first army, but who was present at St. Petersburg on the 26th of December.‡

Aide-de-camp General Orloff, then major-general, since highly promoted, and appointed successor to Benkendorff in the government of the police, received, as we have said, the title of count. Major-General Prince Alexander Menchikoff, since made admiral and director of the ministry of the marine, was recalled to the service. The direction of the private chancery of the emperor, destined to be discharged with an activity hitherto unexampled, was entrusted to the secretary of state, Mouravieff. Colonel Vladimir d'Ad-

* The post which General Araktchéieff had held. For Count Tolstoi, see Note (31).

† The interior guard is a particular troop composed of veterans whose services for the defence of their country being dispensed with, form the garrison of the towns in the interior of the empire.

‡ Count de Toll was afterwards appointed director of the engineer corps, an office which he retained until his death, the 5th May, 1842.

lerberg, of the regiment of guards of Moscow, received the aiguillettes of aide-de-camp to the emperor, and also many other distinctions : greatly honoured and in high favour, he is now general of cavalry, member of the council of the empire, and at the head of the post-office department.

These arrangements respecting his establishment and suite being completed, Nicholas, sustained by firmness of character, felt himself in a position to encounter difficulties, and no longer doubted of the triumph of his cause. Nevertheless, as we shall perceive, the insurrection of St. Petersburg was soon to be echoed in a distant province, or, to speak more correctly, the one was a signal to the other, for the two explosions were a double effect of the same cause. But notwithstanding these two scenes of carnage,—notwithstanding the unusual but still unexpected discontent,—the mass of the population, the peasantry of the various provinces unhesitatingly recognised the new emperor as their legitimate sovereign. The most favourable intelligence was quickly circulated. Some reports, indeed, were spread of disorders which had taken place at Moscow,* and more serious troubles at Tver, but they were all invented, or at least exaggerated. The ceremony of taking the oath passed quietly on the 30th December, in the ancient capital of the empire ; and a few days after the arrival of this

* Even the Russian government confesses that a meeting of conspirators took place in that capital on the 26th of December, 1826. See the "Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry," p. 130.

news, it was learned at St. Petersburg, that not only the first and second army, on the subject of which so many apprehensions had been entertained, but also the military colonies of the environs of Novogorod, where a subdued irritation had prevailed, had made a formal act of submission. We know but too well to what horrible excesses the soldiers of these establishments,—janissaries of a new kind,—abandoned themselves in 1832. The revolt would have gathered a formidable strength if, at the period of the new reign, these men had made common cause with the rebels, and allowed themselves to be urged on by the officers; and the anticipation of such a danger must have put the emperor on his guard against this creation of General Araktchéïeff. He was careful, however, not to give expression to this feeling in the address which he made to the colonial soldiers, inviting them to take the oath. After having congratulated them on the happy situation in which they were placed, he said, "Entering fully into the beneficent feeling which suggested the creation of military colonies, I will confirm your well-being; and as a token of my favour I present to you the uniform which the late Emperor Alexander habitually wore; it shall be preserved for Count Araktchéïeff's regiment of grenadiers, the first who received a colonial establishment."* With respect to the Polish army, of which we

* "St. Petersburg Journal," 1825, No. 157. The emperor made the same present to all the regiments of the guard, giving to each the uniform of their corps which had been worn by the emperor Alexander. In addition, he wished that the officers and soldiers of all the companies of

shall soon speak, there no longer remained any uncertainty with regard to the disposition of the troops, except as related to the detached corps from the Caucasus, placed at a distance of about five or six hundred leagues from the capital. This corps was under the somewhat despotic authority of General Iermoloff,* a strong-minded and energetic man, who might naturally be supposed to have had less sympathy for Nicholas than for Constantine. But Iermoloff has been calumniated when described as factious. Notwithstanding his pride, he was loyal and attentive to his duty; in short, an upright man. What remained of apprehension was dissipated by a report from this general-in-chief, dated from the station of Tchervlenaïa, the 9th January, 1826.

At Warsaw all passed very quietly, as if Poland, grateful for the half-resurrection which she owed to Russia, her irreconcileable enemy, and the principal cause of her misfortunes since 1770, were perfectly resigned to the military government and the triple police force of the cæsarovitch; as if the semblance of a diet, without published debates or freedom of the press, which had been left to them, satisfied all the wishes of the nobility, notwithstanding their old habits of turbulent license. The truth is this, that the country was too well guarded for resistance to be possible:

the regiments of Préobrajensk and of Séménoff, called companies of his imperial majesty, should wear upon their epaulettes, or the decorations which held their place, the initials of that sovereign. Ibid. No. 152.

* He died in 1833. He was truly a king of the Caucasus. We shall devote a notice to him later in the work.

her jailer was still in his place, and the death of Alexander did not alter her position a jot. Constantine kept the public in subjection by means of his excellent Polish army, 40,000 strong, which he had organized. Some select regiments formed the royal guard, where young noblemen of the best families served; and there was also in Poland, or along its frontiers, a detachment of the imperial Russian guard, consisting of the Volhynian regiment of infantry, the Lithuanian grenadiers, and several cavalry regiments, without counting artillery.

The interregnum, common to both countries, was however extremely long. We have seen that the news of Alexander's death reached Warsaw on the 8th of December, one day sooner than St. Petersburg, by an official communication of Baron Diebitsch. The grand-duke had his line of conduct marked out, and he adhered to it: but the scruples of Nicholas, the conferences to which they gave rise, and the goings and comings of messengers between the two capitals, wasted valuable time, so that the emperor's death was not officially announced to the inhabitants of Warsaw until the 1st of January, 1826, the new sovereign's manifesto, bearing date the 25th of December, being published the same day.* The uncertainty, therefore, had lasted twenty-three days, a thing unheard of in Europe, and during this interval all public acts were stopped, it being necessary that they should issue from the residence of the sovereign. The manifesto which the emperor had published at St. Petersburg, he de-

* "St. Petersburg Journal," 1826, No. 2.

clared was intended for all his subjects; nevertheless he addressed some gracious words to the Poles in particular, calculated to reassure them without binding himself too closely to them; for the limits to which their constitution was now reduced were no longer a constraint to the Russian czar, who was but little accustomed to permit a check to his wishes. The following is the principal paragraph of the part of the manifesto of the accession, especially relating to the Poles.

"Poles! we have declared that our unchangeable desire will be to continue the reign of the late Emperor and King Alexander, of glorious memory. This is equivalent to telling you that the institutions which he granted you shall be maintained, and that we now swear and promise before God, that the Constitutional Charter shall be upheld and executed to the utmost of our power."

Anticipating the coronation, which was long delayed, and did not take place until the 24th of May, 1829, the new King of Poland thus pronounced the required oath before-hand, and was immediately acknowledged, as was also his heir, the Grand-Duke Alexander. On the morning of the 2nd of January, all the staff and the imperial royal guards swore fidelity to him, in presence of the cæsarovitch, who had until then shut himself up in the Belvidere palace, inaccessible to everyone.

On the same day, the ministers and members of the council of the administration, being met for the purpose, accomplished this duty under the direction of Prince Zaïonczek, lieutenant of the kingdom, and

their example was followed the next day by the various public authorities, the senate, the council of state, the government commissioners, and all their functionaries. Order was not immediately disturbed, but yet in the midst of the public indifference, nothing occurred to authorize the following remarks, with which a semi-official St. Petersburg paper accompanies the recital of these events.

"To Poland, the first words of her sovereign were words of consolation. She has acknowledged the worthy successor of Alexander, *and the only wish that remains for her to form* is, that the tears she now sheds may attest her grief for the beloved sovereign she has had the misfortune to lose, and be accepted as a tribute of boundless devotion offered to the *new benefactor* whom Providence has granted to her."*

The letter, written in an Oriental style, which the Grand-Duke Constantine addressed from Warsaw to his brother, and of which we have already quoted a passage, bears date the 26th of December, 1825, (7th of January,) 1826. It is a letter worthy of the son of the most absolute monarch of Europe in the last half century—we mean the Emperor Paul—whom M. Thiers energetically calls "the fool of a policy which had been profoundly digested in the Russian cabinet."† The following is a transcript of the letter referred to, according to the French translation of the "St. Petersburg Journal."

* "St. Petersburg Journal," 1826, No. 2.

† "Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire," t. iii. p. 5.

"SIRE,—I have received, with the most lively feelings of satisfaction, the edict, by which your imperial majesty has deigned to acquaint me of your happy accession to the throne of our ancestors, the throne of the empire of Russia, my well-beloved country.

"*The supreme law of this empire,* that sacred law which has been to us a blessing from Heaven, is *the will of the sovereign whom providence grants to us.* In accomplishing this will your imperial majesty has accomplished that of the King of kings, who, in events of high importance, evidently inspires the monarchs of the earth.

"The decrees of Providence are consummated.

"If I have, in any degree, co-operated towards their accomplishment I have only fulfilled my duty, the duty of a faithful subject, of a devoted brother, the duty, in short, of a Russian *who is proud of the happiness of obeying God and his sovereign.*

"The Almighty, who protects the destinies of Russia and the majesty of the throne, who lavishes his blessings on the people whom he finds faithful to his laws, the Almighty, in his mercy, will be your guide, sire, and will enlighten you with his wisdom.

"If my most ardent efforts can contribute to ease the burden which God has committed to you, I hasten to lay at the foot of your throne the homage of my boundless devotion, of my fidelity, of my submission, and of my zeal to execute the wishes of your imperial majesty.

"I pray the Most High that His holy and mysterious

Providence may watch over the precious health of your imperial majesty, that he may prolong your days; and that your glory, sire, the glory of your crown, may be transmitted from generation to generation.

"I am, Sire, your imperial majesty's

"Most faithful subject,

(Signed) "CONSTANTINE."

It has, no doubt, been noticed, that the idea of law, as an expression of the public mind, being placed before the personal wishes of the sovereign, to whom it often acts as a safe-guard, had not yet entered into this whimsical and imperious spirit, which the least contradiction irritated. He was not ambitious to obtain for himself the weight of a crown, dazzling, indeed, but which in present circumstances might prove to be a crown of thorns. There could be no uncertainty as to Constantine's feelings in this respect, after his public act of homage. Even the shadow of a pretext was taken from those who would have made his name the battle-cry of a rebellion. He remained, as he promised, his brother's faithful and devoted subject. In return, the latter left Poland wholly to his government; and the cæsarovitch made the weight of his authority to be felt more and more heavily in consequence,—all division of government ceasing upon the death of the lieutenant-royal, who was lost to his country the 28th July, 1826.*

* See, in the German "Gazette of St. Petersburg," 1826, No. 80, the imperial edict addressed on this occasion to the Princess Zaïonczek.

On the surface the country appeared tranquil; but a subdued agitation did not cease to prevail, and we shall soon have occasion to unfold the secret plots of a conspiracy acting in concert with the Russian treason, and on the actors in which, when discovered, the emperor will vainly endeavour to draw a signal vengeance.

To these circumstances must be attributed the delays with regard to the convocation of the diet, and the coronation of the sovereign. No doubt this ceremony could not take place before the coronation at Moscow, fixed upon at first for the month of June, 1826, and afterwards twice postponed to a more distant period. The crown of Monomachus naturally preceded that of the Piasts and Jagellons. But Nicholas was expected at Warsaw soon after his coronation in the sanctuaries of the Kremlin. He hastened the convocation of the diets, in order that they might proceed to the renewal by thirds of the chamber of nuncios, according to the series arranged by lot in the diet of 1818, and also to the replacing of deceased or retired members.

Some men had concluded from this proceeding that there would be an especial inauguration session, and had attached great hopes to it. But it was not long before they were undeceived.

To replace this faithful servant, the senator-voïvode, Sobolewski, was provisionally named president of the council of administration of the empire.

APPENDIX.

STUDIES, NOTES, AND EXPLANATIONS.

(No. 1.) Page 9.

ON THE TITLE OF CZAR.

THERE is a difference of opinion with regard to the orthography of this word. Formerly it was always written *czar*, but since the commencement of this century the custom adopted by Le Clerc of writing *tzar* or *tsar* has insensibly become established. The latter form is the only one which exactly corresponds with the Russian pronunciation. We have borrowed the form *czar* from the Poles: the Germans also have derived it from them, although in their language the word should be written Zar,* their ʒ being a harsh articulation composed of the two consonants *t* and *s*. But instead of pronouncing this word *gzar*, as the French do, the Poles said *tchar:* they now write *car* and pronounce *tsar*, like the Russians, for their *c* corresponds to *ts*, and is never pronounced as *k*.

It has been said that in the form *czar* the etymology of the word may be perceived as derived by abbreviation from Cæsar, emperor. To this conjecture, however, there is a sufficient objection, namely, that in the old Sclavonic version of the New Testament the name of Cæsar is always given under the form *Kessar* or *Keçar*,† and that the title *tsar* is given in it to kings, and not to emperors. It is true that the Emperor of Constantinople receives the same title of tsar from the Russian annalists, but the more ancient give him also that of Keçar. Amongst the Sclavonians that are not Russians the title of *tsar* is but little known.

But then whence comes it? From what source have the Russians derived it? The following is what Karamzin, the most esteemed of Russian historians, says on this subject‡:

* As Strahlenberg did nearly a century ago.

† *Isydé provélénié oth Keçar Avgousta*, "Then went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus," Luke ii. 1. *Vozdoditié ibo Keçaref Keçarevi*, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," Matt. xxii. 21.

‡ "Histoire de l'Empire de Russie," t. vi. chap. vii.

"This word is not an abbreviation of the Latin Cæsar, as many have erroneously supposed, but an ancient term of the eastern languages. Known amongst us by the Sclavonic translation of the Bible, it has been employed to designate the Emperors of Byzantium, and more recently the Mongol Khans. In the Persian language it implies the idea of a throne or of the supreme power. It may be recognized in the final syllables of the names of the kings of Assyria and Babylon, Phalas-sar, Nabonas-sar, &c." In a note the scrupulous historian adds: "In our printed translation of the Holy Scriptures, we always find in Russ *Kessar* in place of Cæsar. *Tsar* is quite another word."

As it is habitually used with respect to the kings of Kasan, Astrakan, and Siberia, and as Ioann IV. Vassiliévitch seems to have adopted it, more particularly after the conquest of these two neighbouring kingdoms, Huppel* thinks that it comes from thence, and that the Russian autocrats after having gained this considerable extension to their territory, assumed the title of the conquered sovereigns.

The conquest of Siberia, in which the Grand-Duke of Moscow had very little part, took place in the year 1582, that of Astrakhan in 1557, and the definitive incorporation of Kasan in 1552.† Now according to Huppel himself, Ioann IV. assumed the title of *tsar* from 1547: indeed the word is found in the formulary of his coronation, which took place in the commencement of that year.‡

Until that time, says Müller, the learned historiographer of the empire, the Muscovite sovereigns did not themselves assume this title; but it had been given them, nevertheless, in several cases; as, for instance, in 1477, when the citizens of Pskoff sent a deputation to the Grand-Prince Ioann III. Vassiliévitch. Karamzin affirms that in the year 1505 this sovereign, proud of the last-named title, did not pretend to any other, and that in his negotiations with foreigners only he made mention of that of *tsar*, as an

* "Staatsverfassung des Russischen Reichs," vol. i. p. 260.

† Kasan, however, had been taken by Ioann III., in 1487, and the czar, after this dismemberment of Kiptchek, had fallen into the power of the grand-prince.

‡ V. Müller ("Sammlung Russischen Geschichte," vol. v. p. 461). The date, 1345, which we find here, cannot be other than an error of the press. It should be read 1547. In this year the coronation of Ioann IV. Vassiliévitch took place, the prince having just attained his seventeenth year. This ceremony, but little known in Russia at that period, was performed with great simplicity. (See Karamzin, vol. vii. chap. vii.) There was no thought of consecration or public admonition by the metropolitan. On that occasion the theologians pointed out that the prophecies of the Apocalypse were accomplished, the sixth tsaria established in Russia completing the number of empires of which it speaks.

honorary dignity attached to the title of grand-prince, which had long been in usage in his country. Isiasleff II. (1146—1154) and Dimitri Donskoï* (1362—1389) had assumed this title. Under Vassili, the successor of Ioann III. and father of Ioann IV., it had become customary.

The following appears to us the most probable explanation. Whatever may be the true etymology of the word, it was then used, not merely to designate the Emperor of Constantinople, but also the Grand-Khan of the Tribe of Gold, and the khans reigning in the states of Kiptchak, Astrakhan, and the Crimea. Whilst the Grand-Prince of Moscow acknowledged himself the vassal or tributary of these Tartar princes, he gave them the title of tsar, as superior to his own. But when these powers were destroyed, when the sovereigns of Kasan and Astrackan had been conquered and subdued, from that moment, looking upon himself as at the least their equal, he adopted their title, and soon attached to it the idea of his supremacy over them.

In the west, however, a formal distinction was still made between *tsar* and *Cæsar*; and Peter the Great acknowledged this distinction by assuming the latter title as well as that of emperor, (1721,) and in substituting the title of *cæsarovna* for that of *tsarovna*, hitherto borne by the princesses his daughters, whilst the daughters of Ioann V. preserved their title of *tsarovna*. As we have said elsewhere,† Peter understood so well how to place himself on an equal footing with the head of the Roman or German empire, that he caused himself to be named, like him, on a medal struck in 1696, *povélitch Moskofskoï prissno prinastitch*, which answers exactly to *Imperator semper Augustus*.‡ But in adopting this new title Peter the Great had less in view the assumption of greater power than the rendering his title suitable for expressing the authority of the first monarch of civilized Europe. The title of tsar partook somewhat of Muscovite barbarity: he substituted that of Cæsar, to shew that he looked upon himself as a member, and as one of the first members, of the family of the sovereigns of the West. Doubtless he attached no other importance to this change; for in the eyes of the Russians the tsar had always been a superior ruler, a king of kings. The republic of Poland too had ceased to contest the title, as she afterwards did that of emperor, which she would not allow to the Russian sovereigns until 1764, a year later than

* As the sovereigns are called Ioann, and not Ivan, so also the form Dimitri is used with respect to them, and not Dmitri, which is applicable to other persons.

† "Essai d'une Statistique générale de la Russie, accompagnée d'Aperçus Historiques," p. 443.

‡ The title *povlévitch*, superior to that of czar, had been customary under Peter's predecessors.

France and Spain, who had made certain reservations in granting it to Catherine.

The testimony of some well known authors will be sufficient to prove the high importance which the Russians attach to the term *tsar*.

That of the Baron de Herberstein, the ambassador of Ferdinand I., at the court of Moscow, is formal:

Czar *solum Cæsarem seu Imperatorem dici, existiment: unde factum ut Rutheni interpretes, audientes principem suum ab exteris nationibus sic appellari, cœperint et ipsi deinceps Imperatorem nominare, nomenque* Czar *dignius esse quam regis (licet idem significent) existimant.*" See "*Commentarius Rerum,*" *Moscow*, p. 17.

The Frenchman, Marguet, who served at Moscow, with the rank of captain in the body guard of the false Demetrius, (Dimitri Ivanovitch,) in the time of Henri IV., gives the same account. "Now as to the title which they take," he says, "they think there is no greater than that which they have, in being called zar. They call the Roman Emperor Tsisar, which they have derived from Cæsar, and all kings *kroll*, in imitation of the Poles. They call the King of Persia *Kisel Bascha*, and the Turk *Velequi Ospodai Tursk*, which means Great Lord of Turkey, in imitation of his title of Grand Seigneur. But this word zar, they say, is found in the Holy Scriptures. For, wherever David, Solomon, or other kings are mentioned, they are called Zar David, Zar Solomon, which is, as we interpret, King David, King Solomon, &c. And thus they retain the name of Zar as more authentic; with which name, they say, it pleased God to honour David, Solomon, and others, who reigned over the house of Judah and Israel, and they say that the words *Tsisar* and *kroll* are only human inventions, acquired by individuals by remarkable feats of valour. To this effect, after Theodore Iohannes,* Zar of Russia, had raised the siege of Narva, and the deputies and ambassadors on both sides were assembled to conclude peace between Russia and Sweden, they debated for more than two days upon the title of Emperor, which Theodore wished to claim, the Swedes being unwilling to acknowledge him as such. The Russians said that the title zar was still greater than that of emperor, and thus an agreement was made that they should always call him Zar, and Grand-Duke of Muscovy, each party thinking they had deceived the other by the word Zar, &c." "Estat de l' Empire de Russie et Grand Duché de Moscovie," p. 13—15.

These passages are curious, and the historical point to be illustrated is not devoid of interest. As to politics, they have but little concern in this matter, nor is it with relation to them that we

* Foëdor Ioannovitch.

enter upon the discussion. The title of princes matters little in these days, when that of queen, with the rank of majesty, is ascribed to an obscure caçique of a few islands in Oceania, where there are not more than 10,000 inhabitants. All that we are desirous of proving, is the high pretensions of the Russian sovereigns towards the close of the middle ages. Hardly had they conquered the Tartars, whose yoke they had so long and so humbly borne, than they became proud and haughty, and scarcely deigned to acknowledge their equal in the Emperor of the West, before whom the Muscovite ambassadors had always strictly and minutely observed the ceremonial which the etiquette of their master's court prescribed. The following are the terms in which Ioann IV. Vassiliévitch wrote, on one occasion, to the King of Sweden, a monarchy then little powerful it is true, for it was before the era of Gustavus Adolphus, Charles Gustavus, and Charles the Twelfth.

"It is not proper that you should put your name before ours, for the emperor and other great monarchs are our brothers, and you dare not call yourself their brother, seeing that Sweden is not nearly the equal in size of their states. On our part there is no pride, but we have written to you as it is fitting, and with due regard to our monarchy and your kingdom. No one has ever heard of the Great Monarchs of all the Russias having treated with the Princes of Sweden, but those Princes addressed themselves to our city of Novogorod, &c." See Novikoff, "Bibliothèque Russe." In truth, it was only through the mediation of the Muscovite Governor of that ancient mercantile republic, that Russia at that time treated with the kings of Sweden.

But, notwithstanding the high importance attached to the name of tsar, the kings of Georgia and Inereth equally assumed it, and with the consent of Russia. The latter even went so far as to entitle himself *king of kings.**

As to the Caucasus, it would require a lengthened study to become acquainted with all the titles which have been borne by its various princes, and which are even now partly acknowledged by the Russian government. The following are a few of the principal titles: *tsar, dadian, gouriel, bédiel* or *bédian, chamkhal, outzeï, khan, sultan, surkhaï, atabeg,* &c. &c.

The words *tsarie* and *tsarstvo* are both used in Russ to express the possessions of the tsar. In the emperor's title, *in extenso,* Poland, Kasan, Astrakhan, &c. are still enumerated amongst the inseparable tsaries of the empire.

The title of the tsarina was in the same language *tsaritsa,* and that of the children of the tsar *tsarovitch* for the males, and *tsarovna*

* Brosset, "Discours prononcé à l'Assemblée Générale de l'Académie de Saint Petersbourg," p. 31.

for the princesses. We have already said, that Peter the Great changed the title of *tsarovna* to that of *cæsarovna* for his daughters, or *tsarovna*, which answers to the pronunciation. Catherine II. revived that of *cæsarovitch*, in favour of her son Paul, who afterwards conferred it, in the year 1799, not upon his heir presumptive, but upon his second son, the Grand-Duke Constantine, who bore it until his death. It was then attached to the person of the heir-presumptive, the other princes of the imperial family being now entitled grand-duke or grand-duchess, and not *cæsarovitch* or *cæsarovna*.

The following are the terms in which the present emperor expressed himself, when conferring this title upon his eldest son, by a ukase of the 27th of August, (8th September,) 1831. "By virtue of the law of organization relative to the imperial family we command that our well-beloved son, the heir to the throne of all the Russias, His Imperial Highness the Grand-Duke Alexander Nikolaïovitch, be named from this time forth, upon all occasions, successor (*naslednik*), cæsarovitch and grand-duke." This is rather long, but, *byt po cemon*, so be it, according to the formula of the imperial signature.

We shall add one word more in explanation. The termination *vitch*, (not *witz* or *wicz*), in the feminine *evna* or *ovna* is, as every one knows, a patronymic. It may possibly be derived from the Greek *viὸς*, son; perhaps, also, it may imply a diminutive. In Russia, a man of good birth is addressed in conversation by his Christian name followed by his patronymic, and the emperor himself would be addressed in this form by a subject.

Nikolaï Paulovitch could scarcely be displeased at it, as it is the general usage, and recalls an ancient and venerable custom.

(No. 2.) Page 10.

THE HOUSE OF ROMANOFF, BEFORE AND AFTER ITS ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

Although the history of Russia comprehends, with perfect authenticity, ten centuries and sixty-nine reigns, (without counting those of the kings and princes of Halitch, or other secondaries,) we there see the sovereign authority transmitted from father to son, continued in a much more limited number of families than that of the dynasties of the various countries of the west has been.

Commonly and officially, mention is made of only two dynasties in this history.

The one had for its author Rurik, a foreigner, a Scandinavian conqueror, designated also as Varighe or Normand. This dynasty became extinct, in 1598, upon the death of Foëdor, son of Ioann IV. Vassiliovitch, the Terrible; but left after it a number of collateral branches, from which have sprung many princely families, that still flourish.

The other, said to be indigenous, not sprung from the former, but allied to it by marriage, that of Romanoff, is still extant in the present reigning family.

Between these two dynasties there is but the short interval of the years, from 1598 to 1613, a period of troubles and fearful anarchy, when four persons of different origin, Tartars, Russians, Poles, by election or usurpation, for a brief period, wielded a disgraced and perilous sceptre, which they were unable to defend against the impostors who came from all sides to dispute it with them.

The following is a complete chronology of the princes of those two houses, with that of the changes during the interregnum.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE SOVEREIGNS OF RUSSIA.

I. THE RURIK DYNASTY.

1.	Rurik	862
2.	Oleg	879
3.	Igor Rurikovitch	912
4.	Sviatoslaff I. Igorovitch *	945
5.	Iaropolk I. Sviatoslavitch	972
6.	Vladimir I. Sviatoslavitch the Great, the equal of the Apostles	980
7.	Sviatopolk I. Iaropolkovitch	1015
8.	Itaroslaf I. Vladimirovitch	1019
9.	Isiaslaff I. Iaroslavitch	1054
10.	Vsévolod I. Iaroslavitch	1078
11.	Sviatopolk II. Isiaslavitch	1093
12.	Vladimir II. Vsévolodovitch Monomachus	1113
13.	Mstislaff Vladimirovitch the Great	1125
14.	Iaropolk II Vladimirovitch	1132
15.	Vsevolod II. Olgovitch †	1139
16.	Isiaslaff II. Mstislavitch	1146
17.	Viatcheslaff Vladimirovitch	1154
18.	Jourii, or Ghéorghii I. Vladimirovitch Dolgorouki	1155
19.	Isaslaff III. Davidovitch ‡	1157

* Olga Regent, 945—957. † From a collateral branch.
‡ From a collateral branch.

20.	Rostislaff Mstislavitch	1159
21.	Mstislaff II. Isiaslavitch	1157
22.	Andrew I. Iouriövitch *Bagoliouvski**	1167
23.	Mikhaïl I. Iouriövitch	1175
24.	Vsévolod III. Iouriövitch the Great	1176
25.	Constantine Vsevolodovitch	1212
26.	Iourii or Ghéorghii Vsevolodovitch	1219
27.	Iarosloff II. Vsevolodovitch	1238
28.	Sviatoslaff II. Vsevolodovitch	1247
29.	Mikheïl II. Iaroslavitch	1248
30.	Andrew II. Iaroslavitch	1249
31.	Alexander I. Iaroslavitch *Nevskii*	1252
32.	Iaroslaff III. Iaroslavitch	1263
33.	Vassili I. Iaroslavitch	1272
34.	Dimitri I. Alexandrovitch	1276
35.	Andrew III. Alexandrovitch†	1294
36.	Mikhaïl III. Iaroslavitch	1304
37.	Ioririi III. Danielovitch *Moskooskii*	1319
38.	Dimitri II. Mikhaïlovitch	1322
39.	Alexander II. Mikhaïlovitch	1325
40.	Ioann I. Danielovitch *Kalita*	1328
41.	Simeon Ioannovitch Gordii	1340
42.	Ioann II. Ioannovitch	1353
43.	Dimitri III. Konstantinovitch‡	1359
44.	Dimitri IV. Ioannovitch *Donski*§	1363
45.	Vassili II. Dimitriovitch	1389
46.	Vassili III. Vassiliovitch *Iemrwi*	1425
47.	Ioann III. Vassiliovitch *Gordii*	1462
48.	Vassili IV. Vassiliovitch	1505
49.	Ioann IV. Vassiliovitch *Groznii*	1534
50.	Foëdor I. Ioannovitch	1584

II. PRINCES OF DIFFERENT ORIGIN.

51.	Boris Foëdorovitch, (Godoanoff)	1598
52.	Foëdor II. Borissovitch‖	1605

* He had taken the title of grand-prince at the same time as Isiaslaff the III., who had less direct claim to it; but he did not exercise his rights until 1167.

† Daniel, first Alexandrovitch, reigned from 1295 to 1304, at Moscow.

‡ From another branch, sprung from Andrew II. Iaroslavitch.

§ With this earliest conquest of the Tartars the first branch recommences.

‖ At this period the throne was filled by Dimitri Ioannovitch, surnamed *Samozvanetz*, or the impostor (1605, 1606). After him—not counting his wife Marine Muiozeck—came many other impostors.

53. Vassili V. Ioannovitch, (Choniski) * . . . 1606
54. Vladislas I. Wasa† 1610

III. THE ROMANOFF DYNASTY COMPRISING THE HOUSE OF HOLSTEIN-GOTTORP.

55. Michael or Mikhaïl IV. Foedorovitch . . . 1613
56. Alexis Mikhaïlovitch 1645
57. Foëdor III. (or II.) Alexéiovitch 1676
58. Ioann V. Alexéiovitch‡ 1682
59. Peter I. Alexéiovitch, the Great (alone)§ . . 1696
60. Catherine I. Alexéiovna 1725
61. Peter II. Alexéiovitch 1727
62. Anna Ioannovna 1730
63. Ioann Autonovitch 1740
64. Elizabeth Petrovna 1741
65. Peter III. Foëdorovitch 1761
66. Catherine II. Alexéiovna, the Great . . . 1762
67. Paul Petrovitch 1796
68. Alexander Paulovitch 1801
69. Nicholas Paulovitch 1825

Such is the succession of monarchs who have filled the throne, from the Grand-Prince Rurik to the Emperor Nicholas, whether at Kief, Vladimir (on the Kliazma), or at Moscow; that is to say, in the grand principality properly so called, which became successively a tsaria and an empire. From the first half of the fourteenth century they extended their title to that of tsar of all Russia:‖ there were, nevertheless, Russian territories beyond their domination, and these latter soon affected to look upon the title as belonging only to them.

The history of Russia, as a whole, ought to comprise these

* He was descended from Dimitri III. Konstantinovitch, the forty-third prince of the series.

† Son of Sigismund III. King of Poland.

‡ Conjointly with his brother, Peter Alexéiovitch Sophia, regent.

§ First emperor, *imperator*. Formerly the title was *povélitch*, master, autocrat.

‖ Or *all the Russias*. The form in the text, however, is perhaps more correct; for, instead of *goçondar vserossiiski*, we read in the old documents *goçondar vséïa Rousi*, which also shews that Muscovy was not always called *Rossia*, but that the form *Roussia*, or *Rousa*, was applicable to it as well as to the Russian territories properly so called. See "Sobramé goçondarstœnugkh gramoth í dovogoroff" (Moskow, 1813, 3 vols.), vol. i., and Rentz, "Geschichtliche Ausbildung der Russischen Verfassung," vol. i. p. 110.

countries as well as Muscovy,* and the reader will no doubt be pleased to find here, in addition to the preceding list, that of the Princes and Grand-Princes of Halitch, invested also with the title of Kings of Russia, and who were all descended from Saint Vladimir the Great by Iaroslaff I., or from Vladimir II. Monomachus by Mstislaff II. Isiaslavitch, the twenty-first prince of the preceding series.

The founder of the principality of Halitch was Vladimirko, son of Volodar, who was the son of Rostislaff and great grandson of Iaroslaff I.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HOUSE OF HALITCH.

1.	Vladimirko Volodarovitch	1124
2.	Iaroslaff Vladimirkovitch	1153
3.	Vladimir Iaroslavitch	1188
4.	Român Mstislavitch†	1188
	Interregnum	1205
5.	Daniel Romanovitch ‡	1211
6.	Vassilko Romanovitch	1266
7.	Lev Daniilovitch §	1270

who must be carefully distinguished from Vladimir on the Kliazma. In the interval, Vladimir Iaroslovitch and Bela, second king of Hungary, disputed the throne of Halitch with Român.

8.	Jonrii Lvovitch	1301
9.	Andrew and Leo (Leon)	1316
10.	Jonrii II.	1324

* We have been among the first to draw attention to this point, namely, the extension that ought to be given to the history of Russia, (see "La Russie, la Pologne, et la Finlande," Note at p. 510). Many Russian critics, who had not previously been aware of this, expressed themselves with the greatest disdain of the excellent and worthy Karamzin, because he did not take this view.

† Here begins the other branch, descended from Vladimir II. Monomachus, and which already occupied the throne of Vladimir in Volhynia.

‡ Koloman, the son of Andrew, King of Hungary, disputed the throne with him. It was Daniel who received from Innocent IV., in 1253, the title of *Rex Russiæ*: he acknowledged the pope as his *father*, and the vicar of St. Peter. He was crowned by the Abbé de Messina, the pope's legate, in his name. His brother Vassilko had been already acknowledged by the same pope as *Rex Laudemariæ*, King of Vladimiria, or, as it has since been called, Lodomeria (kingdom of Gallicia and Lodomeria). Daniel, once invested with the title of king, was not long in breaking his connection with the Pope of Rome.

§ He established his residence at Lvoff, that is to say, at Leopol, or Lemberg, now the principal place in Gallicia.

11. Boleslaff Troïdénovitch, Duke of Mazovia, nephew of Jonrii 1336
Cassimir III., King of Poland, and brother-in-law of Boleslaff, takes possession of Halitch . . 1340

Let us now return to Muscovy and to the dynasty of the Romanoffs.

Officially, as we have already said, there are but two dynasties counted, which, excepting a short interval, succeeded each other on the principal throne of the Russian nation. To speak correctly, however, the present imperial house, sprung from Peter the Great, through his daughter Anna, Duchess of Holstein-Gottorp, in 1728, is distinct from that of Romanoff, as completely as the house of Lomine, which fills the imperial throne of Austria, is from that of Hapsburg. It is a female branch (the male line was extinguished in the person of Peter II.), and also the younger branch with respect to the descendants of Ioann V. Alexéïovitch, elder brother of Peter, whose descendants, after having reigned in the person of Anna Ioannovna, ceased in 1764, and the following years, on the death of Ioann I., Antonovitch (house of Brunswick), and of his exiled brothers and sisters. To speak correctly; it is the house of Holstein-Gottorp that this female branch of the younger line ought to be called.

This name is not borne by the royal family, and yet it yields to no other in antiquity or distinction. The founder of the house, Adolphus, Bishop-sovereign of Sleswig in 1556, counted the kings of Denmark and Sweden amongst his ancestors. More than this, the latter of these Scandinavian kingdoms fell to his posterity at the same time as the empire of Russia. Under all these circumstances, the house of Holstein-Gottorp stands on an equal footing with the ancient dynasties of Europe. The splendour of its genealogical tree is not contested, nay is incontestable. Until the eighteenth century the blood royal in this house was transmitted pure and unmixed from generation to generation; whilst in the house of Romanoff it became deteriorated long before the generous *mésalliance* of Peter the Great with the orphan of Marienbourg. For in Russia there was a custom, which ages had rendered sacred, that the czars could admit the daughters of subjects to share their throne. Our readers will recall the ceremony of selection which took place upon these occasions.

Why, then, does the imperial family of Russia, notwithstanding the granted distinction of the house of Holstein-Gottorp, refer its origin in preference to the Romanoffs, who for a long time were simple Muscovite subjects, and only ascended the throne by election in 1613?

This question is not difficult to answer. The German name, Holstein-Gottorp, besides being difficult of pronunciation to the

Russians, grates, as it were, upon their ears. Always infatuated in their patriotism, formerly proud to excess, and jealous, with good reason, of foreign ascendency, they would be humiliated to owe to Germany, that country from whence, under Peter the Great, came those adventurers whom they had to pay for costly lessons of civilization,—to owe to them, we say, the sacred person of their emperors, at once absolute temporal masters, and heads of the church, that is to say, representatives of God on earth, in the eyes of true believers.

The first grand-princes of Russia were, indeed, equally of German extraction; and besides, Germany, as we all know, has had the privilege of giving kings to nearly every European country; but the foreign preferences of Peter the Great rendered those national prejudices more lively and irritable, and since then they have been reawakened by the imprudent conduct of Peter III. Passionately fond of his native country,* this emperor took Frederick II., King of Prussia, for his model in everything, and did not conceal his contempt for the manners and customs of the nation over which the desire of his aunt, Elizabeth Petrovna, even more than his birth, had called him to reign.

Wiser than he, his German wife, Catherine II., triumphed over these national prejudices, by means of her talent, her ingenuity, and her yielding manners. She appeared to forget her own and her husband's country, in order to devote herself altogether to the land of her adoption. She was careful not to reject the national name of Romanoff; she had no interest to induce her to prefer that of Holstein-Gottorp instead,† it consequently fell into desuetude; and even now an official interdict prevents historians from advancing it in evidence, to combat the recent pretensions of certain families to whom but a few years back Prince Peter Dolgorouki‡ opposed the noble blood of Rurik to the uncertain, and in many cases humble, origin of the house of Romanoff.

These quarrels are vain, it must be allowed. The Romanoffs—of whom since the extinction of the branch of Ioann V. Alexéïovitch, elder brother of Peter the Great, the princes of the house of

* Germany. He was born at Kiel, the 4th March, 1728, and had received at his baptism, which was solemnized according to the rites of the Protestant Church, the names of Charles-Peter-Ulric.

† Catherine was born at Stettin, the 2nd May, 1729. She also was originally a Protestant, and was called Sophia-Augusta-Frederika, Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst (a princely line which became extinct at the close of the last century).

‡ Under the name of Comte d'Almagro, "Notice sur les principales Familles de la Russie," Paris, 1843, in 8vo. This same Prince Dolgorouki is the author of a learned genealogical work upon his own and the other princely families of the empire. In Russ, St. Petersburg, 1840, and the following years, four pamphlets in 8vo.

Holstein-Gottorp are the only legitimate heirs, were formerly called to the throne by the unanimous desire of the delegates of the nation, as we shall see further on. After such a consecration, their extraction,—be it more or less illustrious, and their genealogy, whether more or less mixed, are questions of very inferior moment. And if the validity of their right be proved, it will not be forbidden to the historian to trace their origin, to examine the traditions connected with it. to elucidate, in short, a few facts upon a subject from which all difficulty has not yet been removed.

When, standing upon the terrace of the Kremlin, at Moscow, from which a magnificent view stretches before you, and turning your back to the large bell which lies upon the ground on its pedestal, as well as to the rather massive tower of Ivan Veliki, you follow with your eyes the slow and winding course of the Moskva,* as far as the somewhat desert eastern quarter called Taganka, you observe that the left bank rises abruptly and forms into picturesque heights, which are crowned with numerous buildings. At the first view of these latter, you are immediately struck by one of unusual size, whose white walls are surrounded by iron-plated roofs, painted green, above which rises an elegant steeple, about seventy yards in height. This is the new convent of the Saviour, in the Russian language *Novospaskoï*. It was formerly used as a place of sepulture for the members of the family which now engages our attention.

This remarkable site attracts you, and excites your curiosity. You descend to the river's side by one of those old staircases, one of those posterns hidden in the rock, by which Napoleon escaped when the heat of the conflagration had reached him. You pass the immense orphan asylum, and cross the unperceived bed of the Iaousa, an obscure tributary of the Moskva, into which it flows immediately at your right. You leave at your left the convent of Andronieff, with its superb bell, and St. Martin the Confessor, one of the finest churches in Moscow, perfectly modern in its construction, the gilded cupola of which overlooks the whole quarter. On the right you see in the distance the majestic monastery of Our Lady of the Don, situated in the midst of verdure and surrounded by charming villas which extend to the barrier Kalonga.

You must climb to the summit of the hill; the ascent is difficult, but you will be amply rewarded by the sight of the spectacle which awaits you.

Before you is the vast plain called the Serpoukhoff quarter; the elevation of the ground conceals the river in part from you; when more to the west it takes an enormous sweep before entering the city of the czars and touching the fort of the Kremlin.

All around, surmounting trees, meadows, and cultivated fields,

* The correct pronunciation, instead of Moskowa.

you see multitudes of domes and bells. At your left rises the imposing monastery of St. Simon (Simonoffskoï) enclosed by a reddish-coloured wall, on which are erected numerous lofty towers, from which the view extends beyond the city, as far as towards the castle of Taritsyn.* On your right the Kremlin, with its cupolas and gilded crosses, sparkles in the sun and looks like a sea of fire.

But let us leave this magical vision, which we could never sufficiently admire, and enter the precincts of the monastery. The total extent of the enclosure is about 650 yards. Beneath the spire a portico is open to the visitor.

To the right and left, along the wall you see the buildings which contain the cells of the monks. The cemeteries are filled with rich monuments in granite, not in commemoration of the great only, but also of humble members of the trading classes whose industry had been rewarded by wealth. In the midst of the enclosure are two churches, united by a vaulted gallery, which extends along both sides of the principal church. This gallery, which is ornamented with frescoes, is extremely curious. On entering it by an iron staircase with from twelve to fifteen steps, you see upon an azure ground, enriched with gilding, a representation of a battle between the Russians and Tartars. In the ranks of the former is a warrior bearing the scales of justice; but death, a hideous skeleton on a white horse, is near him. The Muscovites are giving way, and their prince, distinguished by his purple vestments, is in the greatest peril. All is not lost, however. In front walk the servants of Christ unarmed: their Saviour is at their head, a drawn sword issuing from his mouth. The Tartars, some armed with long pikes, others with bows and arrows, are put to flight. In vain they brandish their sabres; a hundred-headed serpent, awaiting his prey, devours them.

This is very original, and might furnish material for interesting speculation. The style of the figures is somewhat antique; we should be inclined to place them at the close of the middle ages. We are assured, however, that these paintings were finished only 160 years ago—in 1690. They contrast with the angels near the door which leads to the principal church. These figures are of a much more modern character. On the right is the last judgment, on the left the transfiguration; over the door a representation of God the Father, the Creator of the world. Then beyond, on the ceilings, are the likenesses of the grand-princes and czars, those of the patriarchs and metropolitans, those of the apostles surrounding Christ, &c.

* The view from the Belvedere of this convent is one of the most striking that can be conceived. The whole panorama of Moscow is before you.

The convent Novospaskoï was built in this place, in the year 1762, by the Grand-Prince Joann III. Vassiliévitch, who destroyed the Tribe of Gold, and whose reign of more than forty years' duration was one long triumph over the Mongols and Tartars.

Of the two churches, that of the Transfiguration, (*Préobiaj énié Gospodné,*) is surmounted by five little cupolas of ordinary shape. It was here that, at the end of the sixteenth century, the four brothers of Michael Foëdorovitch, who died in their minority, were buried; but the church has since been rebuilt.

Close by the burial-place of the Chérémétieffs is a chapel of very tolerable appearance, in the interior of which are marble monuments encrusted or covered with medallions and inscriptions. Other families, related or allied to the Romanoffs, the Jourieffs, the Tcherkasskoï, &c., have also their funeral vaults here. When once they had attained the throne, the Romanoffs had their place marked amongst the tombs in the cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel, in the Kremlin; but until then their resting place had been at Novospaskoï. Besides the four brothers of the first czar of this house, his sisters and various relatives are buried here. His mother, the nun Martha, also reposes here, as well as his eldest daughter, the princess Irene, who died at Moscow in 1679, after having been married—or according to some, only betrothed—to Waldemar-Christian Guldenlœve, Count of Sleswig-Holstein.* We may add, in conclusion, that besides these two places of sepulture the convent of Voznecenski (of the Ascension) and the cathedral Ouspenski (of the Assumption) both in the Kremlin, also contain the tombs of members of this family. In the former is that of Ouliana (Julia) no doubt the widow of Alexander Nikivitch, who became a nun, and died in 1624. In the latter is that

* Waldemar was the son of Christian IV., King of Denmark, who gave him the island of Œsel as an appanage. He came to Moscow in 1643, but being a zealous Lutheran refused to change his religion, and on this account the Russian clergy opposed his marriage with the daughter of Michael. Michael, if we may believe Le Clerc, ("Histoire de la Russie Ancienne," t. iii. 39,) displayed great liberality in this affair. He became attached to the prince of Denmark, and would have been delighted to succeed in overcoming his scruples. Waldemar, when pressed by him, persisted in his refusal, and offered that his *attachés* should defend his belief: but the Russian priests would not enter upon the discussion. The czar was irritated at this, and asked, "what religion they professed then, since they durst not defend it?"

The affair rested there, but Michael would never consent to the prince's departure; he retained him forcibly, but rendered his captivity as gentle as possible. After the death of Michael, Alexis gave Waldemar permission to leave Russia, which he did, loaded with presents. He entered the service of different princes, and died at Lublin in 1652. According to many authors, it was the Princess Anna Mikhaïlovna whom he intended to marry.

of Philarètus, of whom we shall soon speak at length, and who, like all the patriarchs, rests in this metropolitan church, adjoining the ancient patriarchal palace, where the ceremony of coronation was formerly celebrated.

Let us now turn to the origin of the family. The name has no connection with that of the town of Romanoff, in the government of Jaroslavl, which was called after a prince Român Davidovitch, of the Apanagist house of Jaroslavl, a branch of that of Rurik. In old documents and chronicles, the family which now occupies our attention is scarcely named. All that is known positively about it has been summed up by G. F. Müller, one of the greatest connoisseurs of the Russian archæology, in the following passage placed at the head of his life of Field-Marshal Chérémétieff, whose family, as well as those of Kolytcheff, Jakovleff, Konovnitsyn and Neplonieff, had a common origin with the house of Romanoff.

"The genealogical books which every one knows," he says, "which from very ancient times have been compiled, little by little, with the object of proving the high origin of the most illustrious Russian families, give the Romanoff and the Chérémétieffs the same founder; whom they sometimes call a Verèque, sometimes a Prussian, and sometimes a German (names all of which anciently designated one and the same people). They place his arrival in Russia under the reign of the Grand-Prince Joann Danilovitch Kalita (the Purse), or of his son, the Grand-Prince Simeon Joannovitch Gordiè (the Proud), an unimportant difference, since the former ascended the throne in 1341,* and the latter died in 1353. It is recorded that at that period a man of distinction, Andrew Joannovitch, surnamed Kobyla, came to Moscow to serve under the grand-prince. On account of this surname his posterity figure in the genealogical books under the name of Kobylin. As at that time the crusading brothers were making war in Livonia, in order to spread the Christian religion and to advance their own fortune, and as Russia, at the same time being pressed hard by the Tartars, promised considerable rewards to men of proved valour, it is permissible to represent the ancestor of the Romanoffs and Chérémétieffs as a knight, who, a native of Germany, went first to Russia and Livonia, and from thence to Russia to conquer the infidels."

Two things must be particularly noticed in this passage; the fact of the arrival of Andrew Joannovitch Kobyla, whom the ancient Romanoffs themselves looked upon as their first known ancestor; and the conjecture of Müller, according to which this Kobyla was a German knight, perhaps of the Teutonic order. Taking the fact in its primitive simplicity, the conjecture may be admitted; for, although

* It should be 1328.

supported on an uncertain basis, it has nothing in itself improbable, or at all events impossible. The conjecture falls to the ground however, as will be presently seen, if we adopt the amplification to which it has been subjected, and in which historical criticism cannot recognize any kind of solidity. So long as the czars of the house of Romanoff, almost strangers to the European system, had no intercourse with any but their nearest neighbours, the fact of which we have spoken was in their eyes a very sufficient proof of nobility. The Russians, with a juster feeling than the ancient Latin families, piqued themselves not on their heraldic quarterings, or the aristocratic purity of their blood, but on the tales of valour and high exploit, attached from generation to generation to their genealogical tree. A man, though he were of the lowest extraction was always, in their estimation, ennobled when he had raised himself to the high dignity of boïar.

It is thus, also, in Turkey, where, not to speak of women who may rise from servitude to share the throne of their sovereign, hostlers and barbers have risen to the highest distinction.* More than once in Poland, gentlemen of moderate distinction have encircled their brows with the crown of the Piasts and the Jagellons: and the prince or hetman of the Cossacks, also neighbours of the Muscovites, at the time of the first czars of the house of Romanoff, was most frequently a nameless warrior whose fortune was his sword. Michael Romanoff, in whose person this house was raised to the throne, was the son of a boïar, and related, on the female side, to the members of the Rurik dynasty. He owed his crown to a free and regular election. It was not his personal ambition, but the desire of a nation that made him czar. What other title could equal this? Like him, his son, Alexis Mikhaïlovitch, was content with it. His grandson, Peter the Great, it is true, adopted the customs of the western countries, where birth has always great weight in the appreciation of right. But what importance could he attach to the genealogical tree of his house, who, in the choice of his wife—of her who was to be the mother of the future heirs of the empire—shewed himself as little scrupulous as the Sultan of Turkey? His first marriage was with a lady of good family, one of his own subjects;† the second with a foreigner, born of humble parents, and who, after having been the wife of a Swedish dragoon, had become the mistress of a Russian general, perhaps also of Prince Menzikoff, at whose house the czar first saw her. Eastern manners still prevailed. The wife, raised from slavery to a throne, was

* The same thing happened in Russia to a Circassian slave, during the last century. We allude to Count Ivan Koutaïssoff, that powerful favourite of the Emperor Paul, to whom he had been valet-de-chambre while he was grand-duke.

† Eudoxia Lapoukhin.

counted as nothing with respect to the transmission of blood, and consequently her extraction was of no importance.

But there was a change in this respect after the accession, in 1761, of the house of Holstein-Gottorp to the throne. The members of this family were desirous that the Russians should look upon them wholly as Romanoffs, a more popular extraction than their own, both by name and tradition. They were the more called upon to examine into the genealogy of this family, as, rejecting less distinguished alliances, they chose their wives from amongst the princely houses of Germany, then very scrupulous in respect of birth, at least when the attraction of a crown was not sufficient to counterbalance their prejudices. In a European point of view, reaching no further back than 1341, and without a prince's crown upon its arms, with whatever degree of popularity it might be invested in its own country, the family would have appeared unworthy the alliance of a house, illustrious in rank, and proud of its royal connections. To place themselves on as secure a footing in this respect as in all others, they created a chamber of heraldry at St. Petersburg, which had no task more important than that of seeking out a primitive and more ancient stock, on which to graft this weak and slightly-rooted genealogical tree.

In such cases search is never made in vain. In submitting the armorial bearings of the families of Chéremétieff, Kolytcheff, Jakovleff, Soukhovo-Kobylin, &c., all sprung from the same stock of the Romanoffs, and which were naturally of but moderate antiquity, to a rigid investigation, they discovered in the golden crown surmounting an escutcheon of gules of oval form, the index of a princely house: in the oak they perceived an allusion to the sacrifices which the priests of the Prusso-Lithuano-Samogitian people performed under that tree: in the two silver crosses the proof of conversion to Christianity, and in the lions which supported the escutcheon, one holding a sceptre and the other a globe—the point most important to be determined—their royal extraction. Nothing of this belonged, strictly speaking, to Andrew Ioannovitch Kobylin, but in making fresh researches traces were found of his father, and this father, of whom the books consulted by the learned Müller do not make mention, was Glauda, or Glaudal Kambila Divonovitch. The preference was given to the latter, because in the document in which his name had been found he was described as coming originally from Samogitia, and the neighbouring Sudavia,* and as a member of the princely (or in other words royal, they said) house, which from time immemorial had reigned over the Lithuano-Prussian people. Now, did not this exactly correspond with the result of

* Sudavia now forms part of the kingdom of Gumbinnen, in Eastern Prussia: the chief place was Lyk.

the inspection of the arms? Besides, one must have been struck with blindness not to recognize in the name of Kambyla that of Kobyla, a Prussian word signifying mare, and to which the primitive name had evidently been corrupted.

After this came still further uncertainty! This version was officially adopted. We find it for the first time in the "Mirror of Russian Sovereigns,"* and it has been received as historically true.

The following is an extract on this subject from the Russian Armorial or Peerage, published since 1797, by the heraldic department of St. Petersburg.

"It appears, from extracts taken from authors upon old Prussia, from the Prussian armorial, and from researches made in the archives of the College of Foreign Affairs, that it (this house) is sprung from Andrew Joannovitch, called Kobyla, a descendant of the Prussian king, Veydevoud, to whom his eldest brother, King Prouténo, resigned the royal dignity in 305, A. D., when he became supreme pontiff of the idolatrous worship of Prussia, at the foot of the sacred oak represented in the armorial bearings. King Veydevoud divided his kingdom amongst his twelve sons. A descendant of the fourth, Neded, Prince of Sudavia, Samogitia, &c., named Glauda Kambila Divonovitch, weakened by his struggles against the Teutonic knights, and conquered by them, repaired with his son and a multitude of his vassals to Prussia, to the service of the Grand-Prince Alexander Iaroslavitch Nevski, and received in baptism the name of Ivan, and his son that of Andrew Ivanovitch, commonly called Kobyla. From the latter are descended the Soukhovo-Kobylins, the Romanoffs, the Chérémétieffs, the Kolytcheffs, the Iakovleffs, and many other families."

It is evident that Müller's conjecture could no longer be applicable here. Kobyla is not a knight of the Teutonic order, but the son of one of the victims of the order, a pagan prince of the royal house of the Lithuano-Prussians, a descendant of Veydevoud or Voïdevod,† who, according to a very uncertain tradition preserved by Koïalowicz, but ridiculed by Schlœzer,‡ reigned up to the year 579, and abdicated the throne at the age of 117 years to become, as his brother Prouténo had been before him, sovereign sacrificer (*Krivé-Kriveito*) in the sacred wood of Romové. In the same manner that Prouténo had given his name to the Prussians, so also Litvos (Litt-Alanus), the youngest of the twelve sons of Veydevoud, left his to Lithuania, and Saïmo, one of his brothers, to Samogitia.

* By Malghine, in 1794 (not before!)

† This word means chief, commander.

‡ "Histoire de la Lithuanie," in the "Histoire Universelle" of Halle, vol. i. p. 25.

Unfortunately, all these data, being without a solid historical basis, can only be looked upon as fabulous. Not only may Veydevoud (the Voïvode of the Alains), notwithstanding the testimony of Koïalovicz, who supports his opinion upon an old tradition, be an imaginary personage, but the same tradition is probably no less fabulous when it relates, that on the arrival of the Italians (Normans?) under Palemon, about the year 900, the royal dignity passed from his descendants to this latter, who was elected by the aborigines, duke, or hereditary king of this country. Thus the posterity of Veydevoud, if Veydevoud ever existed, were disinherited long before the epoch of Glaudal or Glauda, a pretended founder of a dynasty in the same country, but of whom the historians of Lithuania and Samogitia make no mention, although in other respects sufficiently clear upon this period.

According to Schlœzer, it is not until after the death of Palemon, about the year 1000, that any light is thrown upon the Prusso-Lithuanian history, and even then it is half involved in fable. Even by the confession of the Baron B. de Campenhausen, who, no doubt, to ingratiate himself with the Emperor Alexander, supported upon tradition a complete genealogy of the house of Romanoff, in which the difficulties are very skilfully eluded or thrown into the background,* this genealogy is wholly destitute of historical foundation; he considers the whole as in the highest degree probable, but it does not approach the character of certainty. The Russian historian also, Prince Tchterbatoff, in occasionally mentioning the Romanoffs, passes in silence over everything previous to Andrew Ivanovitch Kobyla, with whom he commences their genealogy. Karamzin does the same. In speaking† of the marriage of Ioann IV. Vassiliévitch with the young Anastasia Romanoff, he expresses himself thus: "Her family was descended from Andrew Kobyla, who came from Russia in the fourteenth century. It was not the high birth, but the personal qualities of the bride, that justified the czar's choice."

We shall now trace the degrees of the genealogy, and for greater clearness we shall mark them with Roman numbers.

I. It is evident from what we have related, that the first known author of the house of Romanoff is Andrew Ivanovitch Kobyla, the supposed son of Glauda. After having received baptism, he entered the service of the Grand-Prince of Moskow, probably about the year 1330, and became a boïar. He enjoyed such high consideration under Simeon Ivanovitch Gordii, that he was chosen by him to go, in company with another boïar, to Tver, to ask the hand of

* "Genealogisch-Chronologische Geschichte des Hauses Romanow und Sinnes Vorælterlichen Stammhauses," Leip., 1805.

† Vol. vii. ch. vii. of his "Histoire de Russie."

the daughter of Prince Alexander in marriage. He died, leaving five sons.

II. We shall here mention only the youngest, Foëdor Andréievitch Kobylin, surnamed Koscha (the cat). He served under Demetrius Ioannovitch Donskoï, and was one of the witnesses to his will, in 1381. When Vassili II., the son of the conqueror of the Don, had re-established peace with Novogorod, Koscha became in the year 1393 the envoy of the grand-prince to that republic, with the government of which he was soon after entrusted. He was advanced in years when elevated to the high dignity of boïar. His posterity bore the name of Koschkin. The Romanoff family are the descendants of the eldest of these five sons, and the Chérémétieff family of the fourth.

III. This eldest son was called Ivan Foëdorovitch Koschin; but all that is known of him is that he left four sons.

IV. The fourth, Zacharia Ivanovitch Koschin, was a boïar in the reign of Vassili Vassiliévitch the Blind (1425—1462). His children took from him the name of *Zacharin*. It was then the custom to designate all children sprung from the same father by their patronymic.*

The christian name of this father, slightly altered in the termination (Zakharin), remained attached to all his posterity of the first degree, in the same manner as the bough from which this branch issued was called after the christian name of the grandfather (Koschkin); a superior branch was called after the forefather (Kobylin), and in default of family names, the christian or surname of this latter was at the same time the common denomination of a whole lineage.

Le Clerc in his genealogy of the house of Romanoff † has explained this, but afterwards falls into such extreme confusion, that we can no longer follow the lineage in its different degrees. Instead of the genealogy of the Romanoffs, or rather of the Kobylins, to take them in the more remote degree, he gives that of the Iakovleffs, &c.

V. The Iakovleffs were descended from the elder of the two Zakharins; but it is the younger who will now engage our attention. He was named Iourii Zakharitch, that is to say George, son

* This remark does not apply to princely families, for they derived their names from their possessions or appanages. But even in these the family name was often borrowed from a surname or *sobriquet*. Dolgorouki means long-hand, Labanoff, or rather Lobanoff, comes from *Lobân*, having a large forehead; Kobylin, from *Kobyla*, mare: Kolytchoff, from *koltcha*, lame; Gorbounoff, *Gorboun*, hunchbacked; Lochakoff, from *lochak*, mule; Cherebtsoff, from *Chérébetz*, horse; Pleschtchéieff, from *Plesch*, a bald place on the top of the head.

† See "Histoire Ancienne de la Russie," t. iii. p. 4.

of Zacharin. He served under Ioann III. Vassiliévitch, was grand voïvode in several campaigns, particularly in that against Poland, became a boïar in 1493, and died in 1501. His wife's name was Anastasia, but it is not known to what family she belonged. The children of Iourii are distinguished by the name of Iourieff: this branch of the Zakharins had in itself five ramifications.

VI. The third son of Iourii, Român Iouriévitch Zakharin, served with the rank of voïvode, and died the 12th February, 1543. He was the founder of that branch of the Kobylins called after him Romanoff, that is to say Romanovitch, or son of Român. The Russians of the higher classes thus themselves abridged their patronymic by a modest custom. "We are the Romanoffs," said the sons of a father named Român, while the world called them, on account of their birth, Nikita Romano*vitch*, or Ivan Romanovitch. Such are the customs of the country, and we shall do well to investigate them closely.

VII. At the commencement of this new ramification of the branch Iourieff Zakharin, it was composed of three sons and two daughters. Of the latter, the younger married a Prince Sitzkoï; the other was the celebrated Anastasia Romanovna, the noble partner of the Czar Ioann IV. Vassiliévitch, afterwards surnamed the Terrible. They were married in the year 1547. We have all heard of the happy influence of this princess upon a husband of a haughty and violent character, and how all Muscovy wept her early death, which occurred in the year 1560. She left three sons, of whom the youngest only ascended the throne, but he had no children. The posterity of Anastasia, if they had not become extinct in the first generation, might have been distinguished by the name of *Rurik Romanoff*, being descended from Rurik from the male and from Român by the maternal line.

As to the brothers of Anastasia, the youngest only, Nikita (Nicetas) Romanovitch, had descendants. As the brother-in-law of the czar he enjoyed great consideration during his sister's lifetime, and became successively voïvode, first voïvode, and okolnitchéï.* Even after the death of Anastasia he was one of the most eminent persons at the court of Ioann IV., who, disappointing the hopes until then conceived of him, soon became a gloomy tyrant, the torment of all who surrounded him.

In 1563 Nikita was named *dvoretzkoï*, or grand-master of the court, and boïar.

Later when, before terminating his odious career (1584), the czar wished to make his will, he chose him, with two other boïars, to form the council who were to assist his son, Foëdor Ioannovitch, in the government. The latter was born in the year 1557, and was the nephew of Nikita. In contempt of this will, Boris Goudonoff,

* The rank next below that of boiar.

the brother-in-law of the young czar, seized the reins of government. Nikita became a monk, and died soon after, 25th April 1586 (old style): Fletscher says that it was supposed that he died by poison.

VIII. It is asserted that the second wife of Nikita Romanovitch, Eudoxia Alexandrovna, was a princess of the house of Souzdal: according to Nôvikoff, she was the daughter of Prince Alexander Gerbatoï*; it is at least certain that many children resulted from the marriage. There were in all seven sons and five daughters; but only five of the sons survived their father.†

The eldest, Foëdor Nikititch, born about the year 1550, was as much distinguished for his moral qualities as for his personal advantages: being also cousin-german to Czar Foëdor, he seemed destined to play a great part in his reign. But Boris, jealous of the popularity of the Romanoffs, used every effort to undermine their credit and to raise himself to power. Foëdor nevertheless attained to the highest dignities. After having joined the czar in the Swedish campaign, he commanded the army which marched against the Tartars in 1596, and united the rank of boïar to the dignity of voïvode. The Frenchman, Margeret, the captain of the guards already mentioned, speaks of this epoch of the Romanovitches as "the greatest that remained for them." But in 1598 the last czar of the Rurik dynasty died, aged only 41 years. Upon his death-bed he named the Czarina Irene, his wife, as his successor, and commended the empire to the care of the head of his mother's family, and to that also of his brother-in-law and ministers. In opposition to his master's will, Boris, as we have said, usurped the crown. The Romanoffs, although of tried loyalty, were suspected by him: he saw in them competitors for the throne and rivals of his son; and under various pretexts, which were made apparently plausible by infamous machinations,‡ he persecuted them with the greatest rigour. After having been put to the torture, the greater number of the five brothers were exiled (1601) either to Pelim in Siberia, or to distant parts of the European territory: some were executed by the command of Boris.

We shall soon learn the destiny of Foëdor, to whom we shall devote a notice; his wife, Xénie Chestoff, forced like him to adopt a religious life, was shut up in a convent beyond the Lake Onéga, where she received the name of Martha, or Marfa.

The eldest of the brothers of Foëdor, Alexander Nikititch, at first created boïar under the new reign, was put to death in exile. His wife, the Princess Eudoxia Galitsin, died some years before him, on the 1st August, 1597.

* Or Jerbatoï, which corresponds with the pronunciation.

† See Karamzin, vol. x. ch. ii.

‡ We shall enter into particulars further on.

The second brother, Michael Nikititch, raised to the rank of Okolnitchéï by Boris, also died in exile, either by a violent death or from grief, in 1606.

Vassili, the fifth, had the same fate the 15th February, 1602.

The fourth, Ivan, was recalled in 1602, but one side of his body was paralyzed in consequence of an attack of apoplexy.

The persecution extended to their sisters, Euphemia, married to a Prince Sitzkoï, and Martha, wife of Prince Boris Tchersskoï. Irene, the youngest,* was the only one preserved: before the disgrace of her family she had been married to Ivan Ivanovitch Godounoff, cousin to the usurper.

All the Sitzkoï family were involved in the same disgrace. Prince Boris Tchersskoï with his family shared the fate of his wife: the Chestounoffs, the Karpoffs, the princes Repnin, all faithful friends of the Romanoffs, were also among the number of victims.

IX. The children of Foëdor Nikititch nearly all died in their minority: of the sons the only one who survived the storms of this period was Michael (Mikhail Foëdorovitch), destined by Providence to heal the wounds with which Russia had been visited through the wickedness of men and the misfortunes of the times. Further on, we shall see the history of his accession to the throne and the details of his life.

The Romanoff dynasty commences with Michael. In regard to the latter we shall here make one observation.

The members of this dynasty succeeded to the throne in early youth. Michael was seventeen when he ascended it; his son Alexis fifteen; and of the sons of the latter, Foëdor III. was nineteen, Ioann IV. sixteen, and Peter the Great ten.

The Russians had no reason to regret this: Alexis, as just as his father, surpassed him in intelligence and activity; and Peter Alexéievitch became the reformer, we might almost say the second creator of Russia.

X. Twice married, first to a Princess Dalgorouki (1624), then to Eudoxie Streschneff (1626), Mikhaïl Foëdorovitch had by the latter five children, of whom three were sons. The eldest, Alexis Mikhaïlovitch, born in 1630, reigned from 1645 to 1676.

XI. He also was twice married. By his union with Maria Miloslavski (1648—1669) he had twelve children, of whom five were sons. Of these two ascended the throne: the eldest, Foëdor II. Alexéiévitch, born in 1656, succeeded his father in 1676, and died in 1682: the other, Ioann V. Alexéiévitch, born in 1666, notwithstanding his feeble health and limited faculties, reigned nominally at least, jointly with Peter Alexéiévitch, his brother by the father's side, until his death in 1696. Of their sisters we must name the Czarina Sophia Alexéïovna, who, entrusted with the

* There was another named Anastasia.

regency in the name of her brothers, went so far as to assume the title of Autocrat (Samoderjetsa). She was born in 1657, raised to the government in 1687, yielded two years afterwards in her struggle with her youngest brother, and was obliged to take the veil the 18th September, 1689, at the convent of Novodévitchéia at Moscow, and died there the 14th July, 1704.

By the second marriage of Alexis Mikhaïlovitch, with Natalie Naryschkin (1671—1676), there were born two sons and two daughters. The son was the reformer of Russia, Peter Alexéïevitch, born at Moscow the 28th May, (9th June,) 1672, and who reigned with such great glory from 1682 to 1725. He died the 27th January (8th February) of the latter year, aged less than 53 years.

XII. Like his father and grandfather, Peter the Great was twice married.

By his first wife, Eudoxia Lapoukhin (1689—1698), he had first the unfortunate Czarévitch Alexis Petrovitch, born in 1690, married in 1711 to the Princess Charlotte Christina Sophia of Wolfenbüttel, and who perished in 1718 in so mysterious a manner; then another prince, Alexander, who was born in 1691, and died the following year.

By his second wife, the famous Catherine Alexéïovna (1713—1725), he had many children, of whom several were born before their marriage. Except the Prince Peter Petrovitch, who was born in 1715, and died the 25th April, 1719, they were all females: Catherine, Anna, Natalie, Elizabeth, and Margaret. One of them, Elizabeth Petrovna, born in 1713, reigned from 1741 to 1761.

XIII. The Czarévitch Alexis left two children; a daughter, Natalie, who died in 1729, and a son, Peter Alexeïevitch. The latter, born in 1715, reigned under the name of Peter II. from 1727 to 1730, the year of his death.

Peter III. Foëderovitch was cousin-german of Peter II. He ascended the throne in 1761, and was dethroned soon after by his wife, Catherine II. He was the son of Anna Petrovna, the elder sister of Elizabeth, whom Peter had married in the last year of his life to the Duke Charles-Frederic of Holstein-Gottorp. Here commences the collateral branch of the lineage of Peter the Great: it will presently occupy our attention.

At the death of Elizabeth, in 1761, the direct younger branch of the house of Romanoff was extinct; for Anna had died in 1728.

The elder branch, the direct descendants of Ioann V. Alexéïevitch, was also extinct.

We know that it ascended the throne in the person of Anna Ioannovna, born in 1693, the daughter of the imbecile Prince Ioann V. She was for a short time married to Duke Frederic-

William of Courland (1710—1711), but had no children. She reigned from 1730 to 1740.

But Ioann had two other daughters. The elder, Catherine Ioannovna, born in 1691, married a Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and had by this marriage a daughter, Anna Karlovna, born in 1724. This daughter was regent of Russia in 1740, after the death of Anna Ioannovna, her aunt, and died in 1746, leaving five children. The eldest, Ioann I. Antonovitch, reigned while an infant in 1740, but the crown was wrested from him by his cousin Elizabeth. He was then imprisoned in various places, and perished in 1764, in the reign of Catherine II., in the fortress of Schlusselburg, on the occasion of the rebellion of Mirovitch, who tried to deliver him.* Ioann was a Romanoff of the elder branch by the maternal line; but on the father's side he belonged to the house of Brunswick, which was the second female degree of the eldest branch.

The other children of Anna Karlovna and the Duke Antonio-Ulric of Brunswick, Peter and Alexis, Catherine and Elizabeth Antonovitch, died in exile at Horsens, in Jutland: the last survivor of this unfortunate family was Catherine, who ended her life in that Danish town the 9th April, 1807.

Consequently there now remains only the house of Holstein-Gottorp, the female line of the younger branch.

Before entering upon the history of the elevation of the house of Romanoff to the throne, let us say a few words as to its fortune up to that time.

Besides their house in Moscow, situated in the Kitaïgorod (Chinese town), in the place where the convent of Zuamenskoï now stands, they possessed numerous lands, rewards of their services, bestowed on them by the last czars of the house of Rurik. But during the persecutions of Boris Godounoff these estates were confiscated to the crown. Some years after, however, the usurper married one of his nephews to Irene Nikititchna Romanoff, sister of Philarètus; and on this occasion, trying to stifle his resentment against a family whose rivalry he feared for his son, he restored them part of their ancient domains, particularly the village of Klinn, which was the foundation of their patrimony. We allude here, not to Klinn, now a town in the district of the government of Moscow, upon the road between the two capitals, but a large village with a church (*sélo*), belonging to the district of Iourieff-Polski,† and not

* He really reigned, and pieces of money, silver roubles, &c., may be seen stamped with his likeness. This is the prince known by the name of Ivan, whose tomb M. de Custine had so much trouble in finding, and of whom he speaks at such length, vol. ii. p. 347, &c.

† Jourieff of the Plain.

far removed from that town in the government of Vladimir. This estate was assigned for the residence of those members of the family whose lives Boris had spared, and we shall soon see Martha and her son retire there. It constituted the greater part of their fortune at the time of Michael's accession, and was but a very moderate provision.

The following is the history of the election of Michael Foëderovitch, according to the best authorities. Notwithstanding the great interest of the facts and the remarkable circumstances which accompanied them, no historian has entered fully into them. Karamzin stops at the accession of the Romanoffs, and M. Oustrialoff has not been able to devote more than a couple of pages to this memorable epoch in the annals of Muscovy. Nothing then remained for us but simply undigested materials, which we have found in Strahlenberg, in the Magazine of Busching, in M. Artsybycheff's "Narrations of Russia,"* in the Collection of Wichmann, in M. Hermann's "History of Russia," and a few other publications.

After the death of the false Dimitri (1606) and the reign of the feeble Vassili V. Chouïski (1606—1610), Russia fell into total anarchy. Chouïski had owed his crown and brief popularity only to his relation, the hero Kopin. This sole strengthener of his cause perished prematurely (1610), and the shameful defeat of Klouchino was the immediate consequence of his death; the czar was besides suspected of having taken a culpable part in it.

Chouïski being declared unworthy of the throne, was obliged to abdicate and retire to a convent. The Poles afterwards took him to Warsaw, where he died. The council of boïars seized the reins of government.

Ruin and disorder went on increasing; new impostors completed both†: their numerous followers, collected from all parts, gave themselves up to pillage and robbery. Poland and Sweden simultaneously endeavoured to profit by these disorders. Some thousands of Polish soldiers, commanded by the great Zolkiewski, triumphed over the Muscovites, who then resigned themselves to receive Vladislas Wasa,‡ the son of Sigismund I., for their sovereign, and to have a Polish garrison in the Kremlin, whilst the conditions

* "Povestvovanié o Rossü," Moskow, 1838—43, 3 vols. 4to.

† The later history of Marine Mniszech, widow of the false Dimitri, (Demetrius,) and that of her connection with the second impostor, surnamed Czarik, or the little czar, and also Pétrouschka, and the robber of Touchino, are full of interest. The latter, considered by some to be a son of Prince Andrew Kourbski, was in all probability a Polish Jew. Our readers will find some further particulars on this subject further on.

‡ Not Uladislas. Vladislaff is the true pronunciation. There was a kind of election on that occasion. Besides the Polish prince, the candidates were Prince Mstislaff, Prince Vassili Galitsin, and Philarètes.

were being made with the king, by which the crown of Monomachus was to be placed upon the head of his heir. A solemn deputation hastened to Smolensk, then besieged by Sigismund, who wished to begin by possessing himself of this strong town, in order to make it the bulwark of Lithuania,* and Foëdor Nikititch Romanoff, then Metropolitan of Rostoff under the name of Philarètus, was chosen by the boïars of the council, among whom sat another member of this family,† with the Princes Vassili Galitsin and Mesetzkoï, to compose the deputation.

But whilst the King of Poland amused the Muscovite ambassadors by evasive answers, the national feeling re-awoke amongst the Russians, and a general insurrection against the Liékhs‡ was soon the result. It was led by Procope Liapounoff, a gentleman of Riaison. All the towns sent him their quota. His vanguard, commanded by Prince Dmitri Pojarski,§ commenced the siege of Moscow, but was repulsed by the burning of the town, the Polish general having ordered it to be set on fire. Pojarski was seriously wounded, and divisions amongst the other chiefs caused the death of the brave Liapounoff. The monastery of Troïtza‖ alone persevered in its resistance. However, when Cosmo Minin, a superior man, although only a butcher,¶ had raised his patriotic voice at Nijni-Novogorod, and the multitude gathering courage, had again taken up arms, the prince was once more able to take the field with considerable forces.

Many months passed before he was enabled to lead them to Moscow. When at length arrived under the walls of the Kremlin, in August, 1612, he sustained for three days a hot contest against Chodkiewicz, the successor of Gousiewski, defeated him, and put him to flight. Part of the Polish troops, under the command of Colonel Nicolas Struss, returned to the citadel and defended it for some weeks longer. At the end of that time, being pressed by famine, they capitulated; and on the 22nd October, 1612, the Princes Pojarski and Dmitri Troubetzkoï entered together into that inclosure which is the heart of the country and sacred in the eyes of all true Russians. The assistance of Sigismund came too late to arrest the flight of the Poles.

* It was in defending this place that the Russian general, Schein, repulsed three successive assaults.

† Ivan Nikititch Romanoff, and also his brother-in-law, a Chérématieff.

‡ A name or *sobriquet* given to the Poles.

§ Or Pajarskoi, as we say in the same way, Dalgorouki and Dolgoroukoi.

‖ The laurel of St. Sergius one of the first sanctuaries of the nation.

¶ He took from the commencement the title of *the man elected by the whole Muscovite empire.*

Thus were those strangers, hitherto the fortunate rivals of Russia, and now attempting to impose their laws and religion upon them, driven from the soil of Muscovy. Their fortune, which had reached its culminating point, now began to wane. Thenceforward Poland was seen gradually to decay: Alexis Mikhaïlovitch shook it to the foundation; the craftiness of Catherine II. undermined the ground beneath the feet of the Poles, and their complete annihilation followed the first partition in 1772.

At the first news of what was passing at Moscow, Sigismund III. arrested the ambassadors of the council of boïars, and for nine years Philarètes groaned in a rigorous captivity. He was not liberated until 1619, after the conclusion of the peace between the Muscovites and the Polish republic.*

After so many cruel disgraces, some indemnification was due to the illustrious prelate; and Providence was not long in granting it to him.

The deliverance of Moscow had alone been awaited in order to fill the vacant throne by a free election. This could not properly take place except in that revered sanctuary of the czarian power, the Kremlin, where the sovereigns were crowned at their accession, and where their ashes reposed after their death. Delivered now from all foreign influence, the boïars of the council, in November, 1612, despatched letters or mandates to every town in the empire, commanding the clergy, nobility, and citizens to send deputies immediately to Moscow, endowed with full power to meet in the national council (*zemskii soveth*), and proceed to the election of a new czar.† At the same time, to invoke the blessing of God upon this important act, a fast of three days was commanded. These

* See further on, his biographical notice.

† It is in allusion to this, that the Prince Dolgorouki (Count d'Almagro) speaks of two chambers which composed the council of the empire, one called the Chamber of Boïars (*Douma Boïarskaïa*), and composed of these high dignitaries, and a certain number of functionaries chosen by the czar; the other, the Chamber of Commons (*Douma Zemskaïa*), formed of the representatives of the clergy, the nobility, and the citizens. "The *constitution* imposed on Michael Romanoff," he adds, "sworn to by him in 1613, and by his son and successor Alexis in 1645, did not permit the sovereign to impose new taxes, to declare war, to conclude treaties of peace, or to sign death-warrants without the previous vote of the two chambers. Until Peter I. all the ukases were headed with this formula: *Tsar oukasall, i boïaré prgovorili* ('The czar has ordered, and the Boïars have decided'). Peter I., who had little taste for *constitutional forms*, abolished the two chambers, and since then no Russian book has even dared to mention them. But the official documents exist in the archives of the empire." ("Notice sur les Principales Familles de la Russie," p. 30.) We fear that this is applying modern ideas and expressions to a state of things but little compatible with them, and the result will perhaps prove it.

orders were received with great enthusiasm throughout the whole country: the fast was so rigorously observed, according to contemporary records, that no person took the least nourishment during that interval, and mothers even refused the breast to their infants.

The election day came: it was in Lent, in the year 1613.

The race of Rurik, it will be remembered, was extinct only in its direct branch: but, as the other branches proceeding from this had long been subdivided, "The Russians," says Levesque,* "neglected to trace back their genealogy to past centuries, to recover the common stem. At this time," continues the historian, "noble families, sprung from different branches, but with a common origin, did not recognise each other as descended from the same parentage. In fact, distinction resulted more from office than from antiquity of rank."

This will explain why direct extraction from the blood of Rurik was not a more decisive consideration to the members of the electoral assembly.

According to the Baron de Strahlenberg,† who was a Swedish prisoner in Russia at the time of Peter the Great, no small influence was exerted on the proceedings by the Metropolitan of Rostoff from his prison at Marienbourg. "He contrived," says Strahlenberg, "to send a letter to Russia to his wife's brother, Scheremetow."‡

In this letter he exhorted him, as a general and a senator, to take the well-being of the country to heart, and to excite his brother senators to a like interest in the matter by salutary representations. This letter contained many remarkable things. It is even said that the reading of it in the senate caused a sudden change of opinion with respect to the election.

The following are its principal contents:—

"Romanoff proves that Galitsin,§ far from being wrong, did well in dethroning Basil Schniski (Vassili Chouïski), who drew that disgrace upon himself by violating the conditions under which he had been elected, and by acting throughout with cruelty and injustice. That, on the other hand, Galitsin was wrong in electing and even crowning Uladislas (Vladislas) without the consent of all

* "Histoire de Russie," vol. iv. p. 2.

† "Description Historique de l'Empire Russien, trad. de l'Allemand," t. i. p. 70.

‡ Here Strahlenberg is mistaken, and also many other authors, not even excepting the learned historiographer Müller in his notice on the Field-Marshal Chérémétieff, who was not the brother-in-law of Foëdor Romanoff: the wife of the latter was not a Chérémétieff, but a Chestoff. The boïar Foëdor Chérémétieff had married a cousin-german of Foëdor.

§ Prince Vassilis Galitsin, one of the former candidates.

the other senators, boïars, and voïvodes, and that the party who had elected the Prince of Sweden* were equally wrong.

"That, supposing that Uladislas reigned as despotically as the ancient sovereigns of Russia, of which there was no example in other countries, he would prefer to end his days in prison, rather than be restored to freedom to witness the bondage of his country.

"He implores Scheremetow to do all in his power to preserve union in the senate, and to endeavour to make the election fall on one of their number. Finally, he points out the conditions for which they should stipulate with the one to be elected. They were very minute, *and, as it is said,* founded upon the laws of the Polish republic."

Chérémétieff read this letter to the council of boïars, where it appeared to produce the greatest sensation.

"It was represented in the first assembly," continues Strahlenberg, "that the great object to which their attention should be directed, was to avoid all that could contribute to create new troubles; that, however good might be the intentions of those who were inclined to give the preference to a foreign prince, yet that they would by such a course risk the tranquillity of the country by submitting it to a foreign power, which perhaps sooner or later would make pretensions, &c. That, as to the election of a sovereign from their own body, they must take care not to give their voice to any among them whose family was too powerful, or who were too much connected with the past troubles, lest they should confer on themselves a sovereign who had too many friends or too many enemies, either of which would be prejudicial to the public tranquillity. It was required, above all, that he who should be elected should submit to all the conditions prescribed by the assembly, and that he should not be crowned until after he had made a solemn promise to conform to them."

After these preliminaries they passed to the votes, the greater number of which were found to be in favour of the great generals, Galitsin, Vorotinski, and Schniski. But the senators opposed this choice, alleging as a reason, that the first two were too much implicated in the late troubles, and that consequently their election could not take place, according to what had been agreed amongst them.

"That they could not dispute the distinguished merit and high birth of these three noblemen, since they were all descended from ancient and princely houses; but that the Galitsin family was the most powerful in the country, and possessed the most numerous

* Charles Philip, brother of Gustavus Adolphus, proclaimed at Novogorod by the Swedish general, Jacques de la Gardie.

friends; and that, on the other hand, they had at least an equal, if not a greater number of enemies.

"That Vorotinski was very aged and could not reign long, and that there was no one of his family capable of succeeding him: this would soon occasion a new election and new troubles in the country.

"That there was danger in letting the election fall upon Schniski, because his relative had been dethroned by Galitsin, and that he would not fail, sooner or later, to avenge himself of this affront. They concluded by very earnestly begging the assembly to let their choice fall upon some other person."

We know not how far the details collected by Strahlenberg are exact: it has been denied that the claims of the Princes Galitsin, Vorotinski, and Chouïski were so much the subject of discussion as he pretends. The debates were long and stormy. The Princes Mstislafski and Pojarski, it appears, refused the crown; the election of Prince Dmitri Troubetskoï failed, and the other candidates were set aside for various reasons. After much hesitation the name of Michael Romanoff was put forward; a young man sixteen years of age, personally unknown, but recommended by the virtues of his father, and in whose behalf the suffrages of the boïars had been canvassed by the Patriarch Hermogenus, the holy martyr to the national cause. The Romanoffs were connected through the female branch with this ancient dynasty.* The ancestors of Michael had filled the highest offices in the state, and we learn from undoubted authority, that the Czar Foëdor Ioannovitch bequeathed the throne on his death-bed to Foëdor Nikititch, father of the young man.

He fulfilled, moreover, the required conditions. "There were but three surviving members in his family," says Strahlenberg; "he had not been implicated in the preceding troubles; his father was an ecclesiastic, and in consequence naturally more disposed to secure peace and union, than to mix himself up in turbulent projects."

The name of the new candidate, supported by the Metropolitan

* This connexion, though well established, does not justify the expression used by M. Oustrialoff, ("Histoire de Russie," end of chap. vi.) who says that Michael was the only offshoot of the old czarian family in the female line. Michael did not descend from the czars. Anastasia Romanoff, who married John IV. Vassiliévitch, the only member of the family who had worn the crown, was neither his mother nor grandmother. The same degree of kindred in the female line connected many noble families in the country with the old dynasty. We do not point out this inaccuracy as a reproach to the most modern of Russian historians; his account may be a sort of compulsory homage paid to the requirements of the Russian government, which, in all things absolute, substitutes often, for the truths of history, official truths more favourable to its views than the former would be.

of Moscow,* was hailed with acclamation, and after some discussion he was elected. The unanimous voice of the assembly raised Michael Foëdorovitch to the throne.

The tenor of the "procès-verbale" drawn up on this occasion was as follows:†—

"When the deputies from the different towns composing the Russian empire arrived at Moscow, the capital, the deputies of the high orders of the clergy, the metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, archimandrides, and igoumènes (priors, or abbots), and, moreover, the boïars, the voïvodes, the nobles (*dvoriane*), the children of the boïars,‡ the hosts,§ the merchants, the householders, and the inhabitants of the district, all men of upright intentions and sense, in sufficient numbers,

"Then our God most excellent, adored in the holy Trinity, by the intercession of the most holy Mother of God, and the most august *thaumaturgi* of Moscow, because He would not allow orthodox Christians to languish in continual misery, nor see the true orthodox religion of the Greek Church branded by the Latins or by the sacrilegious faith of the Lutherans, sent, in his charity, his Holy Spirit into the hearts of all orthodox Christians throughout the extent of the Russian Empire,

"In order to create among all classes, young and old, and not only among the adults of the male sex, but amongst all, even the children at the breast, a unanimous and irrevocable resolution.

"After the men thus deputed from every town in the empire had consulted together, they with one accord adopted such a resolution, and proclaimed it in the following terms:—

"Shall be Lord, Czar, and Grand Prince of the state of Vladimir and of Moscow, and of all the grandiose and splendid cities of Russia, as well as Autocrat of all the Russias, Michael Foëdorovitch Romanoff Iourieff.

"And except Michael Foëdorovitch Romanoff Iourieff, none shall reign over the empire of Moscow, neither the Kings, nor the sons of the Kings of Poland, Lithuania, or Sweden, nor those of any other state, nor any individual belonging to Muscovite families, nor comprised in the number of foreigners in the service of the kingdom of Moscow,

"Seeing that he our august Lord is the son of Foëdor Nikititch Romanoff Iourieff, cousin-german of the glorious and puissant Lord Czar and Great Prince, Autocrat of all the Russias, Foëdor Ioannovitch, of blessed memory.

* There was no patriarch at that time.

† See the collection of State Documents published in German by Wichman, Leipsic, vol. i. (1819) pp. 599—643.

‡ A sort of esquires, or inferior nobility.

§ Gosteï, principal merchants who traded with foreigners

"Abandoning to the will of God ulterior measures, the heads of the Church, and all ecclesiastical orders, as also the boïars, okolnitchéi, tchaschnicks, and stolnicks,* the whole faithful army of Christ, the hosts and the merchants, the householders and inhabitants, and all the other orders or estates of the Russian Empire, resolved, before proceeding to the confirmation and ratification of this decree, upon a delay of two weeks, from the 7th to 21st February.

"During this interval the metropolitans and the clergy offered up prayers to God, and sent expresses to the towns, to the boïars of the Muscovite kingdom, to Prince Foëdor Ioannovitch Mstislafski, and their companions, to summon them in haste to Moscow, and secretly despatched pious men and sure to all the towns in the empire, save the most remote, to learn the thoughts of the nations.

"Then, on the 21st February, the chiefs of the cities, the ancients, and hetmans, the Strelitzï, the Cossacks, the hosts and merchants, the functionaries and the nobles of the cities, the children of the boïars, assembled in the Cathedral of the Assumption, to implore upon the head of the newly-elected czar the blessing of God most good."

The election over, a deputation was named to repair to the new czar and acquaint him with the result, and it was furnished with instructions drawn up for the purpose.

The clergy on this occasion were represented by Theodoritus (in Russian Feodorite), the Archbishop of Riaisin and Mouran; by Abraham, Archimandrid of the monastery of Tchoudoff (of the miracles) of Moscow; by Abraham, purveyor of the Lavra of St. Sergius,† and by other archimandrids or igoumènes. Among the dignitaries who accompanied it were the boïar Foëdor Ivanovitch-Chéréméticff, the Prince Bakhteïaroff-Rostofski, also a boïar, and the okolmschéï, or dignitary of the second class; Foëdor Vassiliévitch-Golovin; personages of the superior and inferior nobility; in fine, the diaks, or *employés* of Chancery, the officers of the army, and some civilians of distinction, completed the deputation as representatives of the people of the towns—what the French would call "tiers-état."

The embassy thus composed commenced its march for Kastroma, a town situated 316 versts north-east of Moscow, where the young Romanoff was at that time living with his mother.

Born the 9th (21st) July, 1596, Michael Foëdorovitch was then in his seventeenth year: he and his sister Tatiana were the only surviving children of Foëdor Nikititch. His experience was in

* Cup-bearers and major-domos, who superintended the table of the czars.

† Doubtless, the celebrated Abraham Palitsin.

advance of his years. From his earliest infancy he had suffered from the vicissitudes to which his country had been exposed. Torn from his parents, deprived of the refinements of luxury, he as well as his sister had been banished to Bélo-Oséro. The position of the Romanoffs, however, had been somewhat ameliorated during the life of Boris Godounoff. Michael was enabled in the month of March, 1602, to join his mother, who had been up to that moment confined in a convent still farther removed from Moscow: he accompanied her first to her estate at Klinn, and subsequently to the convent of Hypatius at Kastroma, which formed part of the epasch of his father, who had been created Metropolitan of Rostoff by Dimetrius the Impostor. In this asylum the unfortunate wife of Philarètes remained confined for seven years.

The great Polish hetman Zolkiewski, fearing the prestige of the Rômanoff name, tore the child from the convent, and entrusted him to his lieutenant, Gonsiewski, to keep him in safe custody. Conducted to Moscow, Michael remained there during the siege, in the horrors of which he participated, and felt increased satisfaction at the deliverance of his country, since it freed him from a great and personal danger. Hermogenus lost no time in designating him as the future heir, and from that moment the Poles sought to compass his death.

Profiting by the victory of his countrymen, Michael hastened to his mother at Kastroma, and was with her in the convent of Hypatius, probably without having ever thought of the crown, when the news of the arrival of a solemn deputation was announced to him. On the 12th March (old style) it halted at Nivocélié,* a village one verst's distance from Kastroma, where it passed the night, having previously informed the governor of its approach. Followed by the entire population, he advanced to meet the emissaries of the nation, and joining the *cortège*, made a solemn entry into the city. The moment it had come within the walls, a messenger was sent to receive the orders of young Romanoff and his mother, who replied that they would be happy to receiye the deputation the following day.

The procession was formed early in the morning of the 14th: it advanced, preceded by the priests bearing the holy cross, and a picture of the Virgin Mary which had been brought from Moscow. The people followed in crowds.

Michael Foëdorovitch and his mother, in order to shew their respect, advanced to the gates of the outward walls of the convent to meet the deputation. The archbishop and the boïar Chérémétieff immediately hastened forward, and announced to Michael his elevation to the throne. They entreated him and his mother to give their assent, and begged of him to hasten to secure its posses-

* Or Novo-Sélié, new village.

sion. Sister Martha, as she listened to their words, was filled with grief: a victim to the caprice of fortune, and struck with the dangers impending over her darling child, she was dismayed at the brilliant future, which would have captivated worldly vanity; deluged in tears, she earnestly implored that they would confer upon some other head the distinguished honour they had destined for her son. He formally declined it.

The deputation led the mother and son to the church, to place them, as it were, more directly under the hand of God; they followed reluctantly, and the archbishop having officiated, renewed his entreaties, and received nearly a similar reply. The interview, however, was prolonged; and at that solemn conference, where a terrified mother courageously resisted the allurements of a crown, to save the life of her son from the inevitable dangers to which it must be exposed should he wear it, long explanations were entered upon.

Martha repeated and multiplied her objections. Were her son to accept the crown, what would be the fate of the father, the head of the family, a prisoner in Poland? Would not the hatred of Sigismund be fatal to him? The country was, moreover, in a most deplorable condition; what hope was there that an unprotected youth would be able to calm rival factions and raise it from its present state? Morality had received a fatal shock, the sanctity of oaths had been violated, and perjuries perpetrated even while kissing the cross. The treasury was empty, the funds exhausted, the crown jewels carried away; the public domains, a great source of revenue in ordinary times, ravaged and pillaged; the vassals impoverished and almost ruined. Where were the funds to pay the troops? for the enemy, though vanquished, threatened to return with fresh arms. It would, perhaps, be necessary to take the field against the King of Poland, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, the King of Sweden, and other neighbouring princes, all ambitious to aggrandize themselves at the expense of Russia. Under such circumstances, was there not cause to tremble for the safety of the throne? Since the interregnum, the crown had been four times disposed of; and the downfall of each of the four czars had succeeded his elevation. Could Michael look forward to a different fate? Must the young man be given up to inevitable ruin, to the attacks of rival parties, to the vengeance of the Poles, exercised upon father and son?

In order to triumph over such reasonable arguments, the deputation called in the aid of religion, and turned the attention of the pious mother to the undoubted manifestation of the will of Providence, in the unanimity of the votes—a will which man cannot resist without being guilty of sin. "It is written," said Theodo-

retus to her, "that the voice of the people is the voice of God." As the mother still resisted, he caused the priests who carried the crucifix, and the miraculous picture of the Virgin with the infant Jesus, and the grand thaumaturgi of Moscow, to approach. The humble and saintly woman bowed reverently before these objects of her faith, and duty began insensibly to triumph over maternal solicitude, which had paralysed her courage; thus she was beset on every side, and the voice of the people was heard, uniting its entreaties to those of the deputation.

At this moment Theodoretus turned to the young Romanoff. "The holy Mother of God, and the grand thaumaturgi love you," said he; "and they fulfil in you, who are our master, the sacred will of God; and as his holy Mother and the grand thaumaturgi enjoin you, rebel not against heaven's decree, but submit to its commands."

The resolution of mother and son was shaken; the voice of heaven, which they believed themselves to hear, had great power over them: to resist the will of God was an idea they could not bear. The archbishop profited by this disposition, and represented the consequences of an obstinate refusal. Without a head, the empire would be again a prey to the horrors of anarchy; civil war would burst forth with fresh fury, and precipitate the nation into an abyss. "God on the day of his just and terrible vengeance," he continued, "will demand an account of all these things of thee, venerable Martha Ivannova, spouse of Jesus Christ, and of thy son our most puissant Lord, Michael Foëdorovitch. It is amongst us all, old and young, of every city of the great Muscovite empire, a fixed, unanimous, and immutable resolution, a resolution, moreover, sanctified by oath, that, except thy son our Lord Michael Foëdorovitch, none other shall reign over the Muscovite empire, and we will entertain no other idea."

Overpowered by such arguments, and touched by the entreaties made to them, Michael and his mother gave at length their consent that the former should accept the fearful burthen of the empire. "If God wills it, so be it!" cried the young man. The church resounded with joyful acclamations, and loud and prolongued huzzas were heard without, where the people, unable to find room in the church, were thronging in immense numbers, anxiously awaiting the result. The audience turned to the altar, poured out thanksgivings, implored the blessing of God upon his elect, and then tendered him the oath of allegiance. Next day the inferior members of the deputation, leaving their colleagues to escort the czar on his journey, took the road to Moscow, bearing the happy intelligence of the acceptance of the crown.

In that city the people and the council began to wax impatient, and resolved to send another embassy to implore the czar to

hasten his movements: it consisted of the Archbishop of Sowzdal and Townssa, the boïars Prince Vorotinski, and Vassili Petrovich Morosoff, of the okolnitechéï Prince Daniel Ivanovitch Mesetzkoï, and of sundry other personages.

Michael Foëdorovitch, meanwhile, in company with his mother, had quitted Kastroma, on the 19th of March, but was detained at Iarslav by the bad state of the roads, rendered impassable by thaw. He stopped also at the cities of Rostoff and of Peréïaslavl-Zaleskoi, as well as at the sanctuary of the Trinity (Troitzo), celebrated for the shrine of the blessed thaumaturgus Sergius, which sacred relic attracts yearly thousands of pilgrims. In the midst of the convulsions which agitated the country, this convent had acquired new renown by the heroism of its inmates, and by an admirable defence which had been crowned by victory.*

The pious young man could not pass by a spot so dear to the patriotism and religion of the Russians, without offering up fervent prayers at the shrine of the saint, performing his devotions at each of the chapels grouped around, and complying with all the duties prescribed to the faithful. He spent there several days; so that it was the 19th of April when he reached Moscow, exactly one month after his departure from Kastroma. The population poured out to meet him to the distance of thirty versts. Never was seen such a concourse before: eye-witnesses state that the roads could not be distinguished, so thickly were they covered with men. Amidst this sea of human beings, did Michael Romanoff, saluted with the most deafening plaudits, enter the capital.

Arrived within the walls of the Kremlin, he hastened to perform his devotions at the three cathedrals of the Assumption, of his patron saint the Archangel Michael, and of the Annunciation, considered the three principal sanctuaries of this mother of Russian cities. He then repaired to the palace of the czars, divided from the last of the above-mentioned churches by the Palace à Facettes (Granovitaïa Palula), took possession of the residence, and received the homage of the clergy, the boïars, and functionaries of every grade. Michael's mother accompanied him; but no persuasion could induce her to spend the night there. Faithful to her vocation, she was conducted to the convent of Vossneiensk,† and established her residence in this privileged house, near that of the sovereign. The coronation followed closely upon the arrival of the young czar.

* This monastery had been besieged in 1608, and bombarded for six weeks: three assaults were made, and repulsed by the monks and a handful of soldiers. A part of the Polish army was held in check by this weak garrison for sixteen months.

† She died there in 1631.

"Before the ceremony commenced," says Strahlenberg, "he was required to accept and sign the following conditions:—

"1st. To protect and preserve religion.

"2nd. To forgive the injuries done to his father, and to take no hostile proceedings against any individual whatsoever.

"3rd. Neither to frame new laws, nor change old ones, unless circumstances imperatively demanded; to decide nothing by his own sole judgment; and to allow the existing laws, and the usual forms in cases of trial, to remain in force.

"4th. Neither to wage war, nor conclude peace with his neighbours, at his own will and pleasure alone.

"5th and lastly. To prove his disinterestedness, and prevent all law-suits with individuals, he was either to give up his property to his family, or incorporate it with the national domains."

Upon the strength of this deed, Prince Dolgorouki asserted that a constitutional regimen was imposed upon Michael Romanoff. But can it be with truth alleged, that either on this occasion, or previously to the accession of Prince Vassili Chouïski, the prerogative of the crown was restricted?

One fact is certain; the Russian censorship never permits in any publication the question of the restriction of the power of the czar to be mooted. Such a proceeding is no proof of the fact; nor can we accept as such the passage we are going to quote from the "History of Russia" by M. Oustrialoff.

"The events which succeeded this proceeding," he writes, "prove that the question of limiting the rights of the now reigning dynasty was never agitated. Absolute power, in the full extent of the meaning, unfettered by conditions, was placed in its hands. The people were satisfied with expressing the hope, that Russia might be resplendent as the sun, that she might stretch forth in every direction, as she had done under the Czar Foëdor Ivannovitch, that all without her might be obedience and submission, and that peace, tranquillity, and the true faith might reign within her."*

The testimony, however, of the learned historian Müller, of whom we have already spoken, supports the denial advanced in this passage. "After the principal members of the clergy had deliberated," says he, "it was resolved, previously to the arrival of the sovereign, on the 14th of April, to draw up letters-patent, proclaiming the election, and the *absolute power vested in the czar and his descendants*, which letters were signed by all the estates, and despatched in the month of May. The original is still extant in the archives of the empire. In it there is no mention of *conditions or restrictions:* and the assertion of Strahlenberg, that the

* See Burching, "Magazine fur die neue Historie und Geographie," vol. ii. p. 405.

czar signed such clauses, previously to his coronation, (11th of June,) is without foundation."

This testimony, on the part of a learned and impartial historian, well known for his diplomatic researches and exactness, should be of great weight in the discussion, yet we shall see it is not so decisive as it might appear, and does not satisfy all our doubts.

We are acquainted with the contents of the document to which Müller alludes as being still in existence in the archives of Moscow. When the intelligence of Michael's having accepted the crown reached that city, the metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops, in conjunction with the whole of the ordained clergy, held a solemn council in the cathedral, and the boïars, the nobles, and electoral czarian assembly, the public functionaries, the hosts, and all other orthodox Christians, made unanimously, it is said, the following declaration:—

"We have on the holy cross taken oath, and promised, as we now promise in the presence of God, to devote our souls and bodies to the most puissant Lord, to the Czar and Great Prince, honoured, elected, and beloved of God, Michael Foëdorovitch, Autocrat of all the Russias, and to his spouse,* enlightened in the truth and faith, the czarina and great princess, and to the imperial (czarian) children, whom God may please to give them, to serve them faithfully and truly with our souls and bodies.

"To resist till death their enemies, who are those of the empire, the Polish, Lithuanian, and German armies, and those of the Crimea, the traitors Ivaschko Saroutzki,† and others, and never to wish for or seek any other sovereign than our Lord, Czar, and Grand Prince Michael Foëdorovitch; and neither Marinka, nor her son," &c.

* That is to say, his future spouse. Michael contracted his first marriage with the Princess Marie Dolgorouki, 19th September, 1624.

† Saroutzki, or Zarucki, was hetman of the Zaporoghi Cossacks, and one of the principal partisans of Little Peter, called the Brigand of Tauchino, of whom we have already made mention.

This last, whom Marina Mniszech, who could not bear to renounce high rank, had acknowledged as her husband after the death of the first Demetrius the Impostor, was assassinated in 1610, and she shortly after fell into the hands of the Russians. Saroutzki delivered her, proclaimed her son czar, appealed to the army of the Don, and asked assistance from the Shah of Persia. But he was defeated at Voronége, driven out of Astrakhan, followed to the sea-shore by the troops of Michael, and taken prisoner in 1614. Prince Odoïefski despatched him under safe escort to Moscow, with Marina and her son. The Cossack died on the journey, the son of Marina was hanged, and the ambitious mother appears to have terminated her days in prison. Marinka is the diminutive of Marina, as Petrouschka is Little Peter (pronounced Peotr).

"Moreover, we all, who compose the assembly for the election of our most puissant Lord, boïars, okolnitcheï, kniaz,* voïvodes, nobles, and functionaries, will never, without the express orders of the czar, seek or assume any work superior to that which we have derived from our forefathers, or have acquired by service, but will rest satisfied with our patrimonial inheritance, or the property it may please the czar to confer on us.

"Moreover, in the affairs of state, we agree, as we have promised on the cross, to comply, without demur, with all mandates addressed to us, to obey punctually every order emanating from our Lord, Czar, and Grand Prince Michael Foëdorovitch, Autocrat of all the Russias, whether in his imperial majesty's service, or otherwise.

"In fine, we, boïars, functionaries, and diaks, will be very careful with regard to our Lord, Czar, and Grand Prince Michael Foëdorovitch, Autocrat of all the Russias, in the conduct of affairs respecting the nobility or the court, that no embezzlement or intrigue be practised, and we will in this respect vigorously and invariably adhere to the former charter, in confirmation of which we once more tender oath to our Sovereign Lord, Czar, and Grand Prince Michael Foëdorovitch, Autocrat of all the Russias, kissing the cross."

By this it will be seen that some other charter, or letters-patent, or some instrument, in fine, had been drawn up before the one we have just been perusing; but this document no longer exists, or has not been found. Schmidt-Phiseldeck speaks of it in the following terms:—"The Czar Michael Foëdorovitch had consented to a formal capitulation, but was not long before he rendered it null and void. The original of the capitulation was formerly preserved in the cathedral of Warsaw, and we are assured that, at the commencement of the year 1730, the minutes were still in existence in the archives. Are they there now? I do not know."

It exists no longer: Müller has assured us of the fact; but is it true that there ever was such a document? We have our doubts, and we think Schmidt must have confounded it with the instrument of which we have just given the context. Now, as this

* This is the Russian title for "prince;" as the Servian word is *knez*: it appears to belong to the same family as king, konung, könig, of Scandinavian origin, and was doubtless imported into Russia by Rurik and his companions. When the title "grand prince" (*veliki-kniaz*) was adopted, the simple kniaz was reserved for the brothers, sons, and other members of the blood-royal. It descended to the numerous offspring of Rurik in all its branches; and as in every family all children are entitled to it, this title is very common in Russia, and is not always accompanied by fortune.

alludes to an anterior document, we are forced to admit it did exist; still there is nothing to prove that it contained clauses restrictive of the supreme authority. Perhaps the insertion of some such paragraph was voted, but without the assembly insisting on its ratification on the part of a newly-elected monarch, who had shewn such reluctance to accept the crown. Is it credible, that, in the face of the reiterated refusals of Michael and his mother, they would have sought to aggravate the difficulty, by insisting on restrictive conditions, to which the young Michael must have previously subscribed? We do not hesitate to answer in the negative, and the whole history of the reigns of the first princes of this house warrants our incredulity, which is, moreover, shared by Schlœzer, Hupel, and other men of learning. The authority of the czar was, in effect, fully as absolute as that of his predecessors; and, as regards the reign of his son, Alexis Mikhaïlovitch, we have the following testimony from a contemporary.

Baron Meyerberg,* after reminding us that the official title of czar was explained by the addition of those of grand prince and autocrat, adds these comments:—"The grand prince of Russia is in reality a true lord, for, according to former customs, he disposes of everything at pleasure: his will is an irrevocable law to all his subjects, and he possesses over them, as a master over his slaves, the right of life and limb; chastised by his own hand, or flogged by his order, his subjects look upon it as an act of favour. They consider their property as belonging less to themselves than to God and the czar."

This testimony is by no means shaken by the mention made, in the introduction to the "Oulosénïe Zakonn" (Code of Laws), of the same Czar Alexis, where an assembly, composed of all classes of the population, was convoked by order of the autocrat, in order to take its opinion on the new code.

"It was," says Meiners,† "a sort of epitome of the Russian people, but it did not represent the people or the estates of the empire. The czar assembled it at his pleasure, and told it what to do. When the result did not please him, he could punish the members who composed it, send them home, annul their labours, negative their proposals, and act exactly contrary to their advice, without infringing the laws, or violating the rights of any one."

The history of the accession of the Empress Anne strengthens these observations. This princess, of the elder branch of the Romanoffs, hitherto Duchess-Dowager of Courland, pretended at first to submit to the demands of the privy council, composed of some of the principal members of the aristocracy. On reaching Moscow she changed her purpose and threw off the mask, tore to

* "Journey to Moscow."

† "Vergleichung des ältern und neuen Russlands."

pieces the act restricting her authority, and declared that she meant to reign as an absolute sovereign, as *her ancestors had done.* Nothing, in fact, was ever more absolute than their example, and the well-known formula concerning taking the opinions of the boïars was a pure deception. "The council," continues Meiners, "could never assemble but by express invitation, which invitation was rarely given except on days of audience, when foreign ambassadors were present, or in difficult circumstances, when the cabinet wished the odium of its measures to fall upon the council. Travellers could not else have declared, what might be considered as an undoubted fact, that the boïars would never have had the presumption to contradict the great prince, or any of his favourites, and that their functions consisted rather in taking cognizance of decisions already adopted, than in forming any." At all times the will of the czar was held to be the will of God, and no extent of public misery could shake that conviction. We are after all disposed to believe that the clauses, which Strahlenberg says were signed by Michael, were only voted, and never submitted to the czar for acceptance.

Prince Dolgorouki preferred adopting the opinion of a Swedish officer, without attending to the contradictions of history. Admitting the fact to be true, it would be unimportant, since the pretended conditions of the agreement were never carried out.

Nothing could be more critical than the state of the empire at the moment when its destinies were confided to a youth of seventeen. Disorder and anarchy everywhere prevailed. M. Oustrialoff gives us the following picture:—"The strongholds on the frontier which should have served to defend his dominions, were in the hands of external or internal enemies. The Swedes possessed Kexholm, Orécheck, Koporié, and even Novogorod. The Poles ruled in Smolensko, Dorogobuje, Poutivl, and Tchernigoff; the country around Pskoff was in the power of Lisowski; Raisin, Kachira, and Toula struggled feebly against the Tartars of the Crimea and the Nogaï; Saroutzki was established in Astrakhan; Kasan was in revolt. At home bands of Cossacks from the Don and the Zaporoghes, and whole divisions of Poles and Tartars, ravaged the villages and the convents that were still entire, when there were hopes of finding booty. The country was wasted, soldiers were dying of hunger, the land-tax was no longer collected, and not a kopeck was in the treasury. The state-jewels, crowns of great price, sceptres, precious stones, vases, all had been plundered and carried into Poland.

"The young prince was surrounded by courtiers belonging to twenty different factions. There were to be found the friends of Godounoff, the defender of Chouïski, the companions of Vladislas,

and even partisans of the brigand of Touchino; in a word, men professing the most various opinions and aims, but all equally ambitious, and incapable of yielding the smallest point as regarded precedence. The lower class, irritated by ten years of misery, were become habituated to anarchy, and it was not without difficulty and resistance on their part that they were reduced to obedience."

Such, then, was the situation of the country; but Michael found means to redeem it; he triumphed over the first obstacle by dint of patience, assisted by the councils of his father, of whom we shall speak presently.

The character of both father and son is extolled by all their contemporaries. As to Michael, his sweetness of temper has been attested by a celebrated traveller, a worthy predecessor of Baron Meyerberg, whose history of Russia of that period is one of the best authenticated works on the subject which has come down to us. In 1663, Frederick III., reigning duke of Schleswig-Holstein, sent an embassy to the czar, the secretary of which was Adam Oléarius.

He states in his remarkable "Voyages," "The first thing the grand duke did on his accession to the throne was to conclude peace with the neighbouring princes, to obliterate the memory of the cruelty of his predecessors by a system of government so lenient, that it was admitted that Muscovy for many centuries had never possessed a prince whose subjects were so happy. Philarètes was chosen patriarch. The son, whose disposition was excellent, and who was most religiously inclined, entertained a profound respect for his father, availing himself of his advice upon every important occasion, paying him the distinction of inviting him to every audience and public ceremony, where he always gave him the post of honour."

The history of the election of Michael Foëdorovitch required to be elucidated; but we shall not expatiate upon his reign, which is too well known to need comment.

We prefer devoting a few short pages to the history of his father; and perhaps a slight biographical sketch of the life of Foëdor Nikititch Romanoff, better known as the Patriarch Philarètes, may not be without interest to the reader.

We have already spoken of his birth, of his services, of the causes which brought about his disgrace under the Czar Boris Godounoff, who dishonoured a reign, otherwise not inglorious, by frightful tyranny exercised against the family of the Romanoffs. The Russians looked upon the right of the latter to the throne as being better founded than that of the son of the usurper, and this sufficed to render Foëdor Nikititch an object of hatred to the father, who felt the utmost uneasiness on his account.

He sought only a pretext to ruin the children of Nikititch; Simon Godounoff, a relation of the czar, and the execrable instrument of his vengeance, undertook to furnish it. A serf* of Alexander Romanoff accused his master of having secreted noxious herbs in the place where he kept his provisions, in order to practise witchcraft and bring about the death of Boris by poison.

A search was ordered in the boïar's house, and the proof of his crime discovered in some sacks, which had been fraudulently introduced. This discovery caused the circulation of most unfavourable rumours, kept alive and propagated by the confidants of Boris. The sacks were immediately carried to the patriarchs; and such was the ignorance prevailing among the higher classes at that time, that the sorcery was made apparent, and filled all who heard of it with dismay. Arrested with all their relations and connexions, of whom the most influential, Prince Ivan Vassiliovitch Sitkoï, governor of Astrakhan, was thrown into chains and dragged to Moscow, the Romanoffs were brought before a council of boïars, and in June, 1601, declared guilty of high-treason, for having sought to compass the death of the czar by poison. Boris gave some proof of his moderation in only sentencing them to imprisonment for life. We have related the fate of the various members of the family. The eldest Foëdor had his head shaved, was dressed in a prison garment, and sent to the convent of St. Anthony, called Siiski, situated 150 versts from Archangel, as you ascend the Don, at the extreme limits of the north, under the frozen zone. It was there that he received the name of Philarètes, destined later to occupy so brilliant a page in history. His wife, Xénie Ivanovna Chestoff, compelled to take the veil under the name of Martha, was sent to another northern point of Russia, separated, like her husband, from her son Michael, then under six years of age, and his sister Tatiana.

The captivity of the illustrious boïar was at first aggravated by unheard-of cruelty, and by the system of espionage to which he was subjected. His sole comfort was in the performance of his religious duties. At the end of twelve months some relaxation in their barbarous orders cheered his exile; a place of honour was assigned him in the church, and he was allowed the services of a monk, who waited upon him.

In 1605 Boris wished to have him consecrated prior and archimandrid, a dignity which possessed this merit in his eyes, that it estranged still more from the world the man he called "his traitor."

Boris died the same year, and Foëdor Vorissovitch, the cherished son for whom he hoped to secure the throne, by sacrificing one of the most powerful families in Russia, survived him but a few

* Serfs were considered as the most trustworthy spies.

weeks, falling a victim, notwithstanding his tender years, to a popular tumult occasioned by the approach of Demetrius the Impostor.

This impostor, (historians generally agree in calling him so,) supported by the Jesuits and the Poles, was elevated to the throne with his wife, Marina Mniszech, whence he was to be hurled in his turn by a populace greedy of blood. He gave himself out to be the second son of Ioann IV. Vassiliovitch, and consequently shewed great anxiety to repair the injustice of the usurper Boris towards a family allied to his own, and worthy of the greatest consideration. Philarètes, recalled from the regions called the desert of Siiski, was, on the coronation of Demetrius, raised to the dignity of Metropolitan of Rostoff, and had the consolation of seeing her who had been his wife and his two children. Martha the recluse, accompanied by her son, whose education she superintended, sought an asylum in his diocese, which, by a strange caprice of fortune, was the convent of St. Hypatius, at Kastroma, founded in former times by the Mouza Techet, ancestor of Boris Godounoff, and subsequently enriched by the latter, where everything attested the external splendour of this hostile family.

The family of Romanoff took but little share in the fleeting occurrences of the reign of Vassili Chouiski. The Metropolitan of Rostoff was, however, one of the delegates sent to Ouglich, in June, 1606, to bring back to Moscow the remains of the young Dimitri Ioanovitch, at whose tomb, it was said, many miracles were performed.*

After the deposition of this incapable czar, Philarètes, as we have related, was one of the persons sent to negotiate peace with Sigismund III., King of Poland, and to come to an understanding with him as to the conditions upon which the young Vladislas was to be elected to the throne of Russia.

The embassy set out on the 11th of September, 1610, but when it arrived in the camp before Smolensko, it was with great difficulty that it could induce Sigismund to forego his claim, which was to secure the kingdom of Moscow for his son, whilst he insisted on being put into possession of the fortress he was besieging. It is probable that the reports of Philarètes kept alive in the mind of the patriarch those suspicions he already entertained, as well as those religious scruples which the clever Zolkiewski tried in vain to dissipate. At length the holy prelate, unable to restrain his patriotic ardour, in spite of the wavering councils of the boïars, pronounced a public blessing upon the vigorous defence

* See Karamzin and Müller. Scarcely were these relics deposited in the cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel, than thirteen persons declared that they had been admitted to grace and cured of their infirmities. The same occurred during the following days.

of Schien at Smolensko, made an appeal to the nation to preserve its faith, and called upon all capable of bearing arms to hasten to range themselves under the banner of their church and country.

Procopius Liapounoff, another sincere patriot, took the direction of this movement, which was disputed with him by the Prince Dimitri Troubetskoï, and the hetman Saroutzki of Toula, whom we have mentioned as being the champion of Marina and her son.

The Poles fired Moscow, before shutting themselves up in the Kremlin, where they found themselves besieged; but dissensions among their chiefs, and the death of Liapounoff, the victim of assassination, effected a powerful diversion in their favour. Then commenced that frightful disorder of which we have traced the picture, in the midst of which impostors and pretenders to the crown arose on all sides; some were proclaimed in one town, sôme in another, until Prince Pojarski, at the head of the patriots of Nigni-Novogorod, stirred up by Minine, appeared before the capital. This was on the 20th of August, 1610. Chodkiewicz, the successor of Gonsiewski, was beaten in a pitched battle, and Struss, as we have mentioned, was compelled by hunger to capitulate. During this struggle Sigismund at length obtained possession of Smolensko, and conducted the brave defender of the city, Schien, as well as Philarètes and the Prince Galitsin, prisoners to Warsaw.

Notwithstanding the desperate state of his finances, the insubordination of his tróops, the ill-will of the diets, and the confederations continually springing up against him, the king did not abandon his attempts upon Russia; but the negotiations which ensued in consequence, upon various occasions, produced no result.

Vladislas, at the head of an army, once more crossed the frontiers, and appeared for the second time, in 1617, under the walls of Moscow, which he assaulted, and whence he was repulsed.

Deceived in the expectation which the intelligence he kept up with various chiefs had induced him to form, harassed by his troops, who were clamorous for pay, he consented to renounce the title of czar, which he had up to that period assumed, and concluded on the 1st of December, 1618, an armistice for fourteen years. This treaty is called from the name of the village where it was concluded, Déoulina, which is situated about seven leagues from the monastery of St. Sergius at Troitza.

The peace of Stolbovna, 26th of January, 1617, had terminated the preceding year the war with Sweden. The captivity of Philarètes had now lasted nine years; from Warsaw he had been removed to the castle of Marienbourg,* and it was from that place, as it is asserted, that he found means to communicate with the

* In Prussia, according to Strahlenberg, (see also Burching,) for there was also a Marienbourg in Livonia. The notice on Philarètes in the

council of the boïars, and used his influence in the election of the czar, never dreaming that it would fall upon his son.* The cessation of hostilities restored him to freedom. He returned to Moscow on the 14th of June, 1619, and was immediately elevated to the patriarchal chair,† which had remained vacant from the death of Hermogenius, in 1613. Theophanus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who happened to be present at Moscow, consecrated him on the 24th of June (old style) in the same year.

We have already spoken of the filial respect of the czar towards his father; he made him co-regent, and the ukases of that date are all headed "Michael Foëdorovitch, Sovereign, Czar, and Grand Prince of all the Russias, and his father Philarètes, mighty Lord and most holy Patriarch, of all the Russias, order," &c.‡

There exist, moreover, ukases issued in the sole name of the patriarch, thus called out of his usual sphere of action and placed in one in which absolute power was granted him. He took part in all political affairs; all foreign ambassadors were presented to him, as well as to the czar; and at those solemn audiences, as well as at table, he occupied the right of the sovereign. He held his own court, composed of stolnicks and other officers; in a word, he shared with his son all the prerogatives of supreme power.

From this period dates the splendour of the patriarchate, which at a later epoch excited the jealousy of the czar, Peter the Great, who was induced to suppress it in 1721.

Philarètes ever gave wise advice to his son, and the influence he exercised over him was always happily directed.

A general census, of which he originated the idea, produced great improvement in the revenue; but, perhaps without intending it, he contributed by this measure to give fixity to the system of serfage

historical dictionary of the metropolitan Eugene, (in Russian,) a notice copied by Strahl in his work, "Das Gelehrte Russland," is very meagre, and throws no light on the subject; and yet we are assured that there existed in the library of Count Tolstoi a manuscript on the captivity of the son of Nikita Romanoff.

* At least, if we may judge from the passage of a chronological manuscript, produced by Le Clerc, "Histoire de la Russie Ancienne," vol. iii. p. 28.

† Against his own inclination, if we may believe the same piece, published by Le Clerc.

‡ "Veliki Gocoudar:" it is thus that these words are translated, in a French letter addressed by Michael Foedorovitch to Louis XIII., preserved in the "*Bibliothèque Royale*," published by Louis Paris in his "Nestor," (vol. i.:) "all which things having respect to our great power, by the advice of our holy father, *the great Lord*, Philaretus Nequitis, patriarch of all the Russias, and of the principal cities of our empire, we have commanded," &c.

on the soil.* In the performance of his duty as head-pastor, he directed all his efforts to re-establish a press at Moscow,† which had, during the troubles of the interregnum, been abandoned; and he had the satisfaction of seeing, after 1624, many copies of the Liturgy issue from it. He took part in the attempts made to reform these books, the contents of which had, in the opinion of many wise ecclesiastics, been seriously altered in the Sclavonic translations; and the quarrels which thence arose, commencing under Job, were destined to assume a most grave character, under the Patriarch Nicon, one of the successors of Philarètes.

He was ever jealous to preserve intact the ancient faith and traditional customs, but his interference was not always happy or successful. In the formula of the consecration of the waters, the words "and by fire" had been interpolated. Denis, Archimandrid of Troitza, was accused of being the author of this interpolation; after much scruple, Philarètes ordered the words to be suppressed.

Such questions were of immense importance in the eyes of the Russian clergy and the Eastern church in general. Another inquiry, and one of still greater consequence, was, whether Christians converted to the Greek orthodox faith ought to be re-baptized, and it was not in a liberal spirit that Philarètes decided the point. The council over which he presided, in 1620, declared the ceremony of re-baptism to be so much the more necessary as the first baptism had been performed by simple aspersion, and not by immersion. This decision of the synod was reversed one hundred years later by Peter the Great, under the advice of Jeremiah, Patriarch of Constantinople. And, lastly, it was during the pontificate of Philarètes that the alteration in the catechism was made, which was soon adopted by the Bascolnicks,‡ or old believers, and which the Church never sanctioned. Whilst the union was making such rapid progress in White Russia, an orthodox eparchate, under the name of Siberia and Tobolsk, was founded in the Asiatic provinces; a Græco-Sclavonic school was established in the monastery of Tchoudoff, of Kreml, and was the origin of a celebrated ecclesiastical academy, which laid the foundation of further progress and improvement.

The Shah of Persia, having sent to Russia a robe of Jesus Christ (*Khiton*), the patriarch caused it to be received with pomp, and proclaimed a fête in its honour.

Such are the prominent features of the active clerical life of Philarètes: we must add, there are a few of his homilies and discourses extant. He died 1st October, 1633, lamented

* See Oustrialoff's "Histoire de Russie."

† Established in 1560. The first book printed in Moscow, "The Evangelist," appeared in the month of March, 1564. See Karamzin.

‡ A Russian word signifying dissenter, sectarian, or heretic.

by his son, who was absent at Moscow, and by the nation, and was buried, as we have related, at the cathedral of Ousperski (Assumption), in the Kremlin, by the side of Hermogenius, and other chief pastors of his church, in the foremost rank of whom figures St. Philip, the Metropolitan of Moscow, who dared to brave John IV. Vassiliovitch, and address him in the following words:—"We respect thee in the quality of sovereign as the representative of God, but as man thou art but dust." Philarètes shewed the same independence in regard to Sigismund III. He is still venerated as one of the most ardent patriots of Russia, where his name will ever be had in honour.

To close this sketch, we shall briefly give the genealogy of the house of Holstein-Gottorp, allied to the Romanoffs, as has been mentioned, in the person of Anna Petrovna, and which was seated on the throne in its representative Peter III. It was descended from the Kings of Denmark, and owed its separate existence to a partition made in 1544 among the sons of Frederick of Holstein, upon whom the election to the throne of Christiana had fallen. Frederick II., the eldest of the sons, held Denmark. The duchy of Gottorp, so called from a castle near Schleswig, fell to the share of the youngest, Adolphus, who, having been named Bishop of Schleswig in 1556, died thirty years afterwards. He bequeathed this duchy to his descendants. One of them, Charles Frederick, married, in 1725, Anne, daughter of Peter the Great, the issue of which marriage was Charles Peter Ulrick, who embraced the Greek communion, and receiving the name of Peter Foëdorovitch, succeeded his aunt, Elizabeth Petrovna, on the throne of Russia, the 5th of January, 1762.

We shall now continue to trace the pedigree.

Peter III. was a descendant in the XIIIth degree of the first of the Romanoffs of distinction, and commenced the female line of the younger branch. He died a violent death, the 14th July, 1762.

XIV. Peter III. married, 1749, Catherine Alexandrina, Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst. This marriage was not happy: from it descended Paul Petrovitch, born the 1st October, 1754, and his sister Anne in 1757, who died two years subsequently. Paul I. reigned from 1796 to 1801.

XV. Paul was married twice: by his first wife, Nathalie Alexeiovna, Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, (who died 1776,) he had no family; by his second, Maria Foëdorovna, Princess of Wurtemburgh, (who died in 1828,) he had ten children. They are as follows:—

Alexander, born 1777, died 1825.

Constantine, born 1779, died 1831.

Alexandrina, born 1783, married to Joseph, Palatine of Hungary, died 1801.

Helena, born 1784, married to Frederick, Prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, died in 1816.

Maria, born in 1786, married to Charles, present Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar.

Catherine, born 1788, married first to Prince George of Holstein-Oldenburg; secondly, to William I., King of Wurtemburg: died in 1819.

Olga, born 1792, died in 1795.

Anne, born 1795, married the present King of Holland, William II.

Nicholas, born 1796.

Michael, born 1798.

XVI. We shall now give the list of the children, issue of the marriage of Nicholas with Alexandrina Foëdorovna, Princess of Prussia.

Alexander Cæsarovitch, born 1818, married, in 1839, to Maria Alexandrovna, Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt. There are several children by this marriage.

Mary, born in 1819, married, in 1839, to Duke Maximilian of Leuchtenburg; mother of several children.

Olga, born in 1822, married, in 1846, to Charles, Prince-Royal of Wurtemburg.

Alexandra, born in 1825, married in 1844, died the 10th of August the same year.

Constantine, born in 1827.

Nicholas, born in 1831.

Michael, born in 1832.

It will be observed that the grand dukes, sons of Nicholas, have received the same names as the sons of Paul, and in the same order. The elder Russian branch of the house of Holstein-Gottorp has continued to preserve, to the present day, the titles belonging to that house, as well as those annexed to the throne of Russia. The emperor is called heir to Norway, Duke of Sleswig-Holstein, of Storman, of Detmarsen, and of Oldenburg. No real possessions are attached to these titles, though a pretended eventual right, on the part of Russia, to the duchy of Schleswig, or to that of Schleswig-Holstein, has been urged upon the strength of them.

The following are the circumstances under which the Russian dynasty gave up this part of its inheritance. Peter III., heir to Elizabeth, having succeeded that empress, and his uncle, the Prince-Bishop of Lubeck, (Adolphus Frederick,) ascending at the

same time the throne of Sweden, which had been offered to Peter, the house of Holstein-Gottorp had become exceedingly powerful. The King of Denmark, alarmed at the unexpected prosperity of a rival family, although nearly related to it, endeavoured to obtain, by negotiation, the cession of that part of Holstein which this family possessed, or to procure that it should be exchanged for the county of Oldenburg, or Delmenhorst. Peter wished, on the contrary, to profit by the advantage his position gave him, to compel Denmark to restore him that part of Schleswig which had been forcibly obtained from his father, (1713,) Duke Charles Frederick, and in consequence refused to subscribe to the proposed arrangement. He was on the eve of putting his project into execution, when he ascended the throne of that empire to which he had been guided by a most unlucky star. Russia at that moment was at war with Prussia. Peter, a great admirer of Frederick, hastened to conclude a peace, for he intended to employ against Denmark a part of the Russian army, at that time engaged in the seven years' war. The army had already entered Mecklenburg, when a revolution deprived the unhappy monarch of his throne and life. Catherine II. hastened to stop hostilities, and signed, in the name of her son Paul, in 1767, a treaty with Christian VII., which was ratified on the young grand duke, heir to Holstein-Gottorp, attaining his majority, 1st of July, 1773.

By virtue of this act, against which Sweden vainly protested, Paul ceded to the royal family of Denmark all his rights to the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp and to Schleswig, in exchange for Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, which the Emperor, Joseph II., immediately erected into a duchy, and governed for the space of three days; at the expiration of this time, the son of Catherine gave the new duchy to his relative, Frederick Augustus, Prince-Bishop of Lubeck, chief of the house of Holstein-Eutin, a younger branch of his own family.

In this manner did the Russian autocrats voluntarily renounce all their possessions in Germany, whilst the duchy of Oldenburg has remained in the family of Frederick Augustus, which has since formed a new alliance with the imperial family of Russia. We allude to the marriage of the Grand Duchess, Catherine Paulovna, with Prince George, who died the 27th of December, 1812. Their son Peter, Prince of Oldenburg, (born the 26th of August of the same year,) is a general of infantry in the Russian service, and member of the imperial council.

Note (3). Page 26.

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY.

The time will perhaps come, when the Russian ambassador at Constantinople may think proper to act a part, that was formerly played by the Repinns, the Stackelbergs, the Igoëlstroms, in the case of unhappy Poland. We remember yet the profound sensation caused by the visit of the young Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaïovitch to the capital of the Ottoman empire; the courtesy which abolished old usages in his favour, and removed prohibitions, enforced during centuries, against Christians visiting those spots which are connected with religious and local traditions. At the present moment, diplomatic agents, even of a secondary character, for instance, M. Oustinoff, are objects of marked attention at the Porte, and their language is more haughty and decided than would be tolerated on the part of a vizier of the highest rank, at St. Petersburg.

The new palace of the embassy, at Pera, which has been reconstructed, on a most colossal scale, since the fire in the month of October, 1844, affords a striking proof of the importance Russia has acquired in her position with regard to Turkey since the peace of Adrianople. What a difference between the state of her actual relations, and those which she maintained two centuries ago! The reader will be able to judge for himself from the following circumstance:—

On the 25th of January, 1668, during the reign of Mahomet IV., an ambassador from the Czar Alexis Mikhaïlovitch was received to an audience by the sultan at the seraglio. The envoy, filled with the idea of the power of his master, did not think proper to appear submissive, or bow sufficiently low before the padishah, to please the master of the ceremonies. The Turk, insisting on the observance of a barbarous and humiliating ceremony, forcibly placed his hands on the crown of his head, and an attempt was made to cause him to bend as low as possible. He courageously resisted; but the chamberlain, far from letting him go, only pressed upon him the harder, so that the Russian, at last, fell to the ground. His dragoman, losing his presence of mind at the sight, could not articulate a word. The Sultan, growing impatient, ordered the kaïmakan to rid his presence of the infidel. The minister obeyed, and drove out the ambassador, secretary, and dragoman, with a shower of blows administered by his own hands.

We shall give the history of the negotiations between Russia and the Porte, from 1826 to 1829, as a sequel to our publication on the "Empire of the Czars."

Note (4). Page 22.

THE CHARACTER OF THE RUSSIANS, ACCORDING TO THE "EUROPEAN PENTARCHY."

We must first say a word of the work mentioned at the head of this note, and which, published at Leipsic, in German, in 1829, (in 448 pages 8vo.,) caused a profound sensation, and gave rise to many comments.

The "European Pentarchy" is the most audacious panegyric on Russia that ever was composed. It was written at the period when mercenary authors sought to elevate Russia at the expense of other countries, more especially of France, which they represented as having fallen, since the Revolution of July, into a state of decrepitude—as having rotted, in fact, from over-ripeness. If we are to believe these writers, the west, in a state of delirium, knew not what she did: nothing was sacred in the eyes of the people—nothing could check their enterprising, their innovating spirit; nations were dragged, in spite of themselves, down the rapid incline of progress, and, having no means of arresting their course, must necessarily be hurled into the abyss. Everything was falling to pieces; instability was the order of the day, more especially in France, where all old-established institutions were overthrown.

Russia alone had preserved her equilibrium: she alone was young and strong, opposing to the decrepitude of the old nations of Europe a robust and healthy people, in the full enjoyment of intellectual faculties, and whom civilisation, although carried to an extreme, had not altered or caused to degenerate. Such pretensions were prominently set forth in the book of which we have been speaking.

"The foreigner, whose mind is not contracted by prejudice," (says the writer, among other things;) "cannot refuse to the *heroic people of the north* the homage which they claim. The pure volatile blood which courses rapidly through the veins of the Russian, his innate sense of vigour, and the facility with which he extricates himself from the most perilous positions, in fine—his natural *bonhommie*, makes him despise danger, or view it with indifference. Thus, perfectly careless as to the measures of precaution which might be adopted, his favourite sports are exactly those which are attended with danger. He speaks to the emperor without agitation or embarrassment, and yet he is taught to look upon him as a superior being, as the anointed of the Lord. Such a people finds a bulwark in its own breast, and its fidelity is a tower of strength." ("Warlich ein solches Volk hat seine Brust zur Wagenburg, seine True zum Thurme des Heils." Page 420.)

In continuation, the author shews—and this time we agree with him—that it is impossible to speak of an old Russian party—of a party more Russian than the emperor.

"It is a circumstance," says he, "which bespeaks a gross ignorance of the actual position of the country, to speak in our time of a court-party, or an ultra-Russian noble party; no such party exists, or can possibly exist; the emperor, his court, his government, have no other tendencies, no other interests, than the real interests of the Russian people and the Russian nation."

In another passage, (page 76,) the author goes so far as to make Russia "the guardian of the true liberty of Germany, of her morals, science, and intellectual culture; a *destiny perfectly worthy*," he adds, "of *this heroic Sclavonian people.*" ("des Slavonischen Heldenvolks.") Was Mons. Custine acquainted with this passage, when he wrote in his work on Russia ("La Russie en 1839") the following lines, which seem meant to answer it:—"You the regulators of the destines of Europe! do you dream it? You defend the cause of civilization among nations over-refined—you, who but yesterday were a horde, kept under discipline by fear!"

Russia possesses among ourselves the value we choose to give her, which is that of a *parvenu*, more or less skilled in concealing her origin and fortune, and displaying her credit. Her sovereignty, over people more barbarous, sunk deeper in slavery than herself, is, we admit, her destiny; it is written, if I may use the expression, in her future records: "her influence over people more enlightened is precarious."

And is it a German who invokes the safeguard of Russia for his country, who proclaims that Germany requires such a patronage, and who places under this shield the liberty, morals, and civilization of the great Teutonic people? One can with difficulty believe it. The author of the "Pentarchy" preserves the anonymous; his work, very interesting, and full of ideas, is written with the profoundness of the German mind. Whoever be the author, whether a Russianised inhabitant of the Baltic provinces, an amphibious diplomatist, half-Muscovite, half-German, or a learned foreigner, adorning a text rough-drawn by another hand, we must admit he is a man of mind, research, and wit. We are astonished that his work has not been translated into French.

Germany has not failed to protest against the injurious protection which he had the audacity to insult her by offering, and she would protest still more strongly to-day, since she has seen the Russian government impose a new bondage upon two other governments, to destroy the last remnant of the ancient independence of the Polish people.

Germany knows well that it is not to her neighbours of the

north that she can turn, to aid her to obtain the liberties she claims, and which her advanced state of civilization, her exemplary morality, and habitual moderation render her worthy to possess. She is no longer in the state of weakness in which she found herself at the treaty of Luneville, and which compelled her princes (as the Russian diplomatist cited formerly says) to "turn their eyes to Russia as to a Saviour."

Prussia has a noble-minded king, who is worthy to sympathize with the generous impulse of a free people; but she must be aware, that if, after so many reclamations, she could only succeed in obtaining, in lieu of the long-sought-for constitution, the letters-patent of the 3rd of February, 1847, it is to the remonstrances of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, and to the docility with which her sovereign listens to advice from thence, that his backwardness must, in great measure, be attributed. Fortunately, the influence of the cabinet of St. Petersburg over that of Potsdam is on its decline; and, if King Frederick William wishes to inspire Germany with confidence, it will continue to be so—such confidence as she requires to feel, before she will recognise the supremacy of Prussia, a power half-German, half-Sclavonian, and Lettonian, and entrust her with the guardianship of her interests, her high civilization, and the constitutional guarantees which many of the states have acquired.

It is Russian influence which has paralysed the constitutional tendencies of Prussia; and the publication of the letters-patent of the 3rd of February one would feel disposed to call an abortion, were it not that liberty, powerful in itself, knows how to profit by the least concessions, and how to advance from small beginnings to reach the goal, and assure her final triumph.

Let us return to the "Pentarchy:" we might give extracts from it, which would cause the greatest astonishment, not only among the French, but among every other nation of the west, but we must refrain from doing so at present: we shall be compelled, later, to turn our attention to this book, when the time shall come to introduce, in our historic studies, the account of the insurrection of Poland. We shall make but one citation relative to the maritime interest of Russia; but, as it refers to another passage of the text, the reader will find it further on, in a note.

The "Pentarchie Européene" is not sparing of adulation, as the reader will perceive; but, before its publication, the flatterers of the colossal power had held nearly the same language. Count Adam Gurowski, a *ci-devant* Polish refugee, published, in 1834, a book called "La Verité sur La Russie," written in French. This book is written without much persuasive power, but it is not without talent. According to the author, "It is impossible to deny that Russia, in our days, hangs hovering over the destinies

of mankind." "It is to-day," he continues, further on, "that Russia reaps the fruit of her labours, and of the efforts of Peter the Great and of Catherine. In another century she will profit by what is being accomplished in our's. Humanity is developed by slow and scarcely perceptible, but continually progressive, movement. Russia, a principal component, and most powerful agent, in this development, must be subjected to an appreciation of years. She must be measured and judged by ages."

This remarkable pamphlet is not precisely in accordance with our own views of "Truth concerning Russia," but its notions and statements are not, we must admit, dictated by ignorance; and making allowance for over-anxious zeal, bordering upon flattery, we recognise ability in many ideas which are cleverly developed by the author.

The following quotation, intimately connected with the subject of our text, and to which the present note refers, will, we believe, suffice to justify the favourable judgment we have given of this book, in spite of the exaggerations it contains, which we point out by placing them in italics.

"Russia is in a progressive state, and contains within herself the principal elements of progress; she possesses vast acknowledged resources, *intellectual* as well as material. She has the required conditions of power and greatness; geographical position, an intelligent population, a consciousness of political existence; originality—that is, capability—derived from within herself, and consequently free from imitation; and, lastly, unity, which is everything, and which cannot be interrupted from abroad, or prevented from giving aid to any object requiring the resources of the state.

"A preponderating political power would require that union which Russia possesses in the middle of Sclavonia. The Russian government marches, and will continue to march at the head of a nation, to whom it distributes the civilization of which it is the sole depository; it absorbs the whole nation, as its life and soul, giving it motion, guiding its interior machinery, and impelling or stopping it* at pleasure, as in the wisdom of its councils it may consider best for the good of those whose prosperity is entrusted to it.

"Such is autocracy in Russia. Strong in herself, that country needs not to borrow assistance from abroad, or to submit to foreign influence; for woe to a nation which, without native power and strength, expects succour from without!

"Russia is central, condensed in her strength: this condensation not only gives her life, but is the main artery from which the other vessels branch.

* The author, it must be understood, speaks of his own country (Poland).

"By means of this interior organization *Russia will ever command events,* and cannot be dependent upon them. Her own power will always protect the development of her own wants and secure her happiness.

"The executive may at times, in its details, deviate from the path which the supreme will of its head has traced, for there is nothing perfect in this world; but at all events the supreme will, soaring above individual interests, can have but one object, namely, to combine and harmonize the wants of those beneath it. Alone as it stands, *free from every selfish, mean, and confined tendency,* such a will classifies, controls, and satisfies the various exigences it is destined to guide.

"Russia thus possesses a civilizing influence within herself which Poland never had. This continual aggrandisement is providential. In order to operate on a vast scale, strength must exist: to unite Asia to Europe, demands preponderating power; this will be the first act of that definitive union, towards which humanity is marching with gigantic steps. The most powerful link of that union is *Sclavonia personified in Russia,* who is personified again in *her ruler, who represents her* at the great congress of states, and who fashions Asia by attracting her towards European civilization and intelligence.

"It is with a view of accomplishing this fusion, that modern Russia has profoundly penetrated into all the relations of Europe, as well political as commercial.

"Her existence and greatness are as necessary to the world as are those of France, England, and Germany. Without the contributions of Russia, the vast mart of the world would be incomplete, and she will continue to afford in great abundance productions remarkable for beauty and utility. Russia, in developing herself with the East at her side, cannot fail to add to the moral and physical enjoyments of the West, by supplying a variety of productions which she alone can collect.

"The diversities of zones and regions comprising her territory, and the Sclavonic unity, promise a large harvest, as well to material wants as to intellect and imagination, among mankind in general. The *warehouses of the merchant, the museums of Europe, as well as the cabinets of the learned, already teem with them,* and contribute thereby to the various interests of humanity.

"But all these prodigies could only be the work of a great and universal will, which alone gives to power a creative faculty; and if, in Russia, the nation was not, as it wholly is, centralized in the government, it could not produce such great results, nor give hopes and certain guarantees for the future." (Page 68—72.)

In concluding, Count Gurowski draws a parallel between Poland, the land of his birth, and Russia, his adopted country:

between Russia, saying to the world "Ego sum quia sum!" arrived at the point she now occupies without assistance, aided only by the views, the direction, and wisdom of her successive emperors, who are the *summary of the high intelligence of power*, as the power is of the state, subject to an enlightened, elevated, and domineering will; and Poland, parading her griefs before foreigners, imploring succour, without ever having known how to suffice for herself, whose past history was without utility to Europe, and whose future is confounded with the future of Russia, as a part is with its whole.

Again, he thus resumes the parallel: "In Russia everything is active, in Poland all is passive. One represents life, the other a corpse which has undergone the stages of decomposition."

"La Verité sur la Russie" was put forth as an experiment; in the other work, "La Civilisation de la Russie," the author has completely unmasked himself. To prove this, it would be necessary to multiply quotations; and the reader may not be curious to learn more concerning the singular production of an ill-regulated mind, of which, moreover, he has seen some samples in the work of M. Marmier, "Lettres sur la Russie," vol ii. p. 73.

Note (5). Page 32.

PANSCLAVONISM.

Europe contains at the present day more than sixty millions of Sclavonians: this grand ethnographical division is, after the Roman family, more considerable than either of the others; the German race occupies a third rank. We know the elements of which this last division is composed. Guided by the language spoken by the different Sclavonic tribes, the Abbé Dobrowsky was the first to divide them into two branches, the western Sclavonians, and those of the south-eastern.

The first branch, that of the western Sclavonians, forms three classes; viz. 1st. The Lekhs, or Leikhs, to which the Poles, the Kassoubes, the Silesians, and the Pomeranians belong. 2nd. The Tchekhs and Slovaks, of which all the indigenous population of Bohemia and Moravia form part, and the Slovaks of Hungary. 3rd. The Polabes, a name which embraces the Sclavonians of northern Germany, Lutitzes or Deletes, Bodritzes, Sorbes, Miltchanes, &c.

In the second branch, that of the Sclavonians of the south-

east, there are likewise three classes; viz. 1st. The Russians with their several classifications, Muscovites or Grand Russians, Little Russians, and Cossacks, Ruthenes, or Roussniacks of Red Russia (Gallicia), of White Russia, and Black Russia.* 2nd. The Bulgarians or primitive Ouraliens,† who are now entirely fused with the Sclavonians of Mœsia. 3rd. The Illyrians, to which belong the Serbes (Servians, Esclavonians, and Bosniaks), the Dalmatians, the Montenégrins, and lastly the Vineles or Slovanes, that is, the Sclavonians of Carynthia.

Let us now say a word on the name of the Sclavonians. It is not exactly known whence they came. The first mention of them occurs in Jornandès (Sclavi, Sclavinni), and in Procopius (Σκλαβηνοι, and Σκλαβινοι), and perhaps we are justified in recognising them in the Σταύνοι of the geographer Ptolemy. Some persons derive the name from *Slava*, "glory," others, with greater probability, from *Slovo*, "a word." For we say Slovines as well as Sclavonians; and in the primitive spelling of the last name, Slovianini, there was no *a*, but only an *o*.

Moreover, the Sclavonians have two words which correspond with Gog and Magog, *Iran* and *Touran:* these words are the Slovenes, or men who speak, who have a community of language, and the Niemtzi,‡ or dumb, that is, those who do not understand one another, who speak in a different idiom; it evidently means speakers and non-speakers. With regard to this simple explanation—too simple, perhaps, to please the *savants*—two men of great weight in such matters, the Abbé Dobrowsky, and M. Shafarick, have opposed an hypothesis, which we will not permit to detain us, notwithstanding our profound respect for the learning of these authors.

The Sclavonians are a race more ancient than their name, which appeared for the first time in Jornandès,§ that is, not before the sixteenth century. They were formerly called Serbes, and known to Pliny ("Hist. Nat." vi. 7) and Ptolemy (v. 9), and we afterwards find them in Procopius ("De Bello Gallico"), and in Vibius Sequester (at the word Albi). The name Venedes, which we meet in Tacitus ("Annals," 11), and that of Antes, known to Jornandès and to Procopius, equally serve to designate them.

By no party have these various points been discussed with more learning than by the erudite author of the "Sclavonian Antiquities" ("Antiquités Slavonnes"). Although the Sclavonians have no con-

* For these historical denominations, we refer our reader to our work on "Russia, Poland, and Finland," &c.

† That is, the Ougre and Finland race, approaching the Turkish.

‡ Plural of Niémetz.

§ "De Rebus Geticis" viii. Veneti, Antes, Slavi: Principaliter tamen Sclavini et Antes nominantur; de temporum successione xv.; præter instantiam quotidianam, Bulgarorum, Antarum, et Sclavinorum.

nection either with the Scythians, or Sarmatians, M. Schafarik believes them, with reason, to have been long established in Europe, as long as the Celts, the Thracians, the Germans, &c. He thinks it possible that they were the same people as the Budins, the Nueres, the Borysthenites, falsely called Scythian cultivators, and confounded with them.

Towards the close of the fourth century the Sclavonians were overwhelmed by hordes of barbarians, whence originated much confusion in the traditions concerning them. They soon, however, began to emerge from the chaos around them, their name reappeared in history, and Christianity, which they received at one and the same time from Byzantium and Rome, brought them once more into contact with civilization.

Notwithstanding this, no attention was paid in Europe up to the close of the last century, to this important ethnographical element; *savants* thought as little of it as statesmen, and had, doubtless, long forgotten the remark made in the sixteenth century by Baron Herberstein, ambassador of Ferdinand I., to the Court of Russia, viz.: "that the idiom of his native country, Carynthia, had been of great service to him in enabling him to understand the, at that time, almost unknown language of the Muscovites."

This indifference is explained by the fact that, excepting in Poland, and Russia, the Sclavonians had everywhere lost their independence; in Germany, Hungary, and Turkey, they were a conquered race.

Poland, ever a prey to convulsions at home, could exercise no influence in the countries beyond her frontiers; and Russia, before she could fill her destined place, and emerge from her barbarism, was engaged in intestine broils, which demanded all her resources.

The Turks, often defeated by Muscovite arms, succeeded in checking their advance beyond the Danube, and it was not till 1829, that they saw for the first time, a Russian army force the barrier of the Balkan. The burning of Moscow, and the disastrous retreat of Napoleon gave the signal, and Russia delivered Europe from the supremacy of France.

Arriving as conquerors at Prague, the heart of old Sclavonian civilization, they were received there as brothers, as members of the great Sclavonic family.

The Russians occupied at that moment so brilliant a position in the world, that it became impossible for men of learning, in any country in Europe, to remain strangers to their history, language, and literature.

The Sclavonians began to engage public attention, and those members of the family, who were subjects of other powers, flattered in their pride of descent by the greatness of Russia, boasted

of their connection with her people, of their common origin, and the ties by which they were united in language.

When at a latter period, victory bore the Russian eagles to the plains of Adrianople, the Sclavonians of Turkey awakened at length from their protracted lethargy. Supported by the Russian Colossus, the Servians and Bulgarians were animated by a strength to which they had hitherto feared to trust; they felt shame at their degradation, and remembering with pride that they were Christians, ceased to tremble at the sight of a turban, and opened their hearts to the whispers of hope. From that moment the Sclavonians became the engrossing subject of observation; the Hankas, the Palockys, the Kollars, the Gaïs, stimulated the ambition of their race, by reviving the culture of a language hitherto neglected, and that roused the popular feeling by its noble and poetic accents, which found an echo in the hearts of the people.

It was this general *réveille* of the Sclavonians which gave birth to the idea of Pansclavonism. The meaning of the word is easily understood. Imitating "*Panhellenisme*," it conveys the idea of the amalgamation of the Sclavonians of every denomination, either into one nation, or confederation; or else into a moral and intellectual community, based upon common origin, and upon similarity of language, though diversified by various idioms; but the groundwork of which would form a literary language, to be adopted by all, and create a firm bond of union between them.

The idea of amalgamating the various members of the Sclavonian family into one compact nation is a chimera, which can never be seriously entertained. The different branches of this mighty ethnographical family, are not less widely disunited than those of the German race, which comprises Germans, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, &c., &c.; or those of the Roman family, of which are French, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese.

If the former possess, not as the latter do, distinct and strongly-marked nationalities, rich in old, political, and glorious traditions; if even their idioms be less dissimilar from one another, they hold, on the other hand, two hostile creeds, and are divided by the antagonism of their religious traditions. Each of the leading branches, moreover, has its peculiar literature. There exists a Bohemian, a Polish, and a Russian literature. The commencement of a literature has dawned in Servia; and even, it may be added, in Illyria. Each is jealous of the other, and pretends to greater antiquity, superior merit, and higher advance. The Latin and Greek Sclavonians have long followed diverse destinies, excepting on the score of their national independence. Bohemia and Illyria, subject to Austria, have assuredly no reason to envy Russia, with whom, at bottom, they feel no greater sympathy than with Germany, their neighbour and master.

In the days of religious persecution, when the inhabitants of Bohemia were either Hussites or Lutherans, they might have appealed, as the dissenters of Poland subsequently did, to the powerful assistance of the head of the Sclavonic empire of the north-east, if, at that period, the country had ranked as a power in the eyes of Europe; but the reform, in Prague, was nipped in the bud, and religious persecutions are, now-a-days, impossible.

The government of Austria is generally paternal, in spite of the recent occurrences of the bloody carnival of Gallicia; but, if it be popular in Bohemia, Dalmatia, and, above all, in Carynthia and Carniola, it can pretend to no affection from Poles or Russians. All these branches, of one stock, have an existence apart, which they have no idea of renouncing. They have, moreover, various tendencies, which they are not prepared to direct to one sole and common end.

It is not, therefore, from that quarter, that any danger can arise to the west of Europe. That political union, to which Germany, properly so called, has long aspired, and towards which everything seems to direct her,—history, customs, and community of interests,—cannot be, as it were, suddenly improvised by the Sclavonians, whatever may be the predictions of their poets, and the temporary hallucination which prevails in certain literary coteries.

But, by a strange abuse of language, a partial "Pansclavonism" is also alluded to, as, for example, the fusion of Russia and Poland into one kingdom.

Count Adam Gurowski, with whom the reader is already acquainted, was the first who, if we are not mistaken, started this idea.

"Russia," he writes, in 1834, "is tending to become a mighty and influential power in Europe, under the name of *united Sclavonia*, and as representing Sclavonian nationality in the equilibrium of the continent. Poland opposed the Sclavonian march, and Russia found that there was a vital necessity that she should, to effect her purpose, absorb a country which would place her in more immediate contact with the west. Providence declared in her favour. Poland, which at no time possessed political preponderance, was necessitated to make room for a body, whose march was signalized at every step by the attractive force which drew kindred nations around it. This march, though slow at the commencement, was not less sure; the nearer it approached the goal, the greater became its force and rapidity. The co-existence of Poland and Russia is an impossibility, and would be an historical monstrosity. *Sclavonia requires unity:* she requires one head, one focus, oneness of tendency, and of will. This internal question is now definitely settled."

"One of the first laws of human nature is," says the same author, further on, "ascension, as much for races as for individuals; the tendency of every man is to elevate himself—to rise in his individual capacity, as the member of a nation. The Sclavonic race, subject to the common lot of humanity, feel the necessity of belonging to the European family. Russia, in their name, has nearly accomplished the mighty mission which Polish torpor could never effect. Russia is continually occupied in bringing about the union, the aggrandizement, and the political consideration of these people, so nearly connected. Poland would have pursued a diametrically opposite course. The influence of religion and language, two powerful aids, assure to Russia their sympathy, and attract others also. The *irresistible force* of *this attraction* will soon *effect the union*. Poland, isolated as she was, represented nothing; her interests could not be separated from Russia, whom *Providence has destined* to become the *mother and protectress* of the Sclavonians. It is by Russia that great and salutary events will be produced."

These ideas, to which the illustrious poet, Adam Mickiewicz, gave the authority of his name, have since fermented in the heads of the Poles, and found favour, more especially since the failure of the last attempt made in Gallicia and Poznanie.

The ancient hatred of the Poles against the Germans revived with so much more violence, that the latter accused them of an incurable levity, and began to cool in their cause. Many of the young nobles spoke of a reconciliation with Russia, and of throwing themselves into her arms.

"The Russians are our oppressors," they said; "but, at all events, they are of the same race. If we are condemned to submit to the yoke of a conqueror; it is better he should be one of ourselves, than that we should witness, in our cities, the spectacle of the haughty foreigner, or bow our heads before the pretended superiority of Germany. With Russia for our master, there is less disgrace, and more consolation for the future."

Such language, dictated by the disappointment of recent humiliation, betrayed an incredible forgetfulness of first griefs; nay, we must add, a real renunciation of independence. It was not long entertained, and the Polish emigration, at London and Paris never adopted ideas, so well calculated to ensure the triumph of their oppressors, the success of whom threatens to involve in ruin civilization itself. But, if the Poles have renounced this species of Pansclavonism, is it so with the Russians? No one will affirm it.

The fusion of Poland with Russia, is a task which the cabinet of St. Petersburg has undertaken. It caused the reports, circulated in 1846, of a project for the definitive union of the two

countries, to be contradicted; but it aims, nevertheless, at effecting this object, and will not be diverted from it. We dare not affirm that it will not be successful.

Patience has been of great service to Russia, since the days of Peter the Great. By its aid, she will, we fear,—profiting by the faults of the Polish nobility, and seeking the alliance of the middle classes,—accomplish this task. Such a Pansclavonism as this is possible, if by that name we may call the simple union of the destinies of Poland with those of Russia.

The question of another species of Pansclavonism, directed against Russia, was discussed in one of our principal reviews; and this falls under the head of Pansclavonism of the second degree, mentioned above, which would be, at least, a partial confederation among the Sclavonians.

Such a union all but exists, in reality, in Austria, and is only practicable under that form. If it has any re-inforcement to expect, it will be on the side of Turkey.

Another confederation might have been formed in Poland, if the Congress of Vienna had entertained the idea of re-establishing the ancient republic, by uniting, in a federal bond, independent of the republic of Cracow, the fractions which it parcelled out among Russia, Austria, and Prussia. We will refrain from discussing this opinion, of which we do not see the practicability.

In our opinion, the only true Pansclavonism, is that of the third order indicated, reduced to a simple intellectual communion. Pansclavonism is a question of civilization, rather than of politics. To the exclusiveness of ancient societies has succeeded the universality of modern, which tends, with no less ardour, to effect union, than did the former to produce sub-division into infinitesimal segments.

Up to the present time, a republic of letters has been the only one which has been able to maintain itself, and even this has, perhaps, lost something of its universal character, since Latin has ceased to be the language of literature, or to be employed in the transaction of affairs, and since a greater respect for national idiom, everywhere cultivated with care, has threatened to weaken the predominancy of the French tongue in the polite world. In this republic, unity, it is true, was based upon a common language, only used by certain classes of the social body, but which, among these classes, everywhere formed one of the principal elements of education. Among no race could this common language be more easily established than among the Sclavonians, who no more require to borrow from pagan antiquity, than from a rival modern society, more anciently civilized than themselves.

Their different idioms, in spite of the specific characters distinguishing each, are but dialects of one and the same language;

the type of which would be the Sclavonian, used in the church service, enriched by contributions from each. These same idioms are not so firmly established by master-pieces of composition, as not to be capable of modification, sufficiently to effect approximation, and thus might be formed a general Sclavonic language—the language of books, and of eloquence, and the study of which might form a part of liberal education. Authors could thus count upon an immense increase in the numbers of their readers, which would be an incalculable advantage in the midst of people little advanced in civilization, and amongst whom the taste for literature is almost exclusively confined to the upper class. The Sclavonians have great difficulties to surmount, in order to reach the point, which the Roman and German families, their elders in civilization, have attained; but their combined efforts, if they have but the ambition to equal those seniors, may promise the dawn of a new intellectual existence to the world.

Nothing more contributes to unite peoples, nothing more strongly creates the sentiment of fraternity, than community of language and literature. Thus, by introducing the Sclavonians to the same sphere of ideas; by keeping alive the same traditions; by making them participate in the same title to intellectual glory, will be paved the way for political union, which may at last bring about the fusion that has been foretold, but of which nothing has, as yet, announced the near probability.

Thus understood, Panslavonism appears to us to be of immense importance, and we believe it is under this point of view that it is considered by those eminent men, who have become its chief promoters.

Such a union would offer nothing threatening; it would not be a political league, formed to aggrandize any power, but simply a communion of ideas and sentiments, which would elevate minds, and give those who participate in it a consciousness of their force and dignity.

The consequences of such an association are incalculable, it is true; but it is to future generations that they are bequeathed.

(Note 6.) Page 43.

THE PROGRESSIVE AGGRANDIZEMENT OF RUSSIA.

Russia has not always presented those colossal proportions which appear to us so alarming in the present day: four centuries ago her extent was scarcely double that of France.

The following is a calculation of the successive additions, which have raised her to the magnitude which she has attained. It comprises the possessions in Asia and America, as well as those in Europe: we beg to be understood as giving them not as altogether correct, but as nearly approximating to the superficies and population. The former is calculated in square kilométres.

	Superficies.	Population.
1462. Commencement of the reign of Michael John Vassiliovitch	1,000,000 .	6,000,000
1535. Accession of John IV. Vassiliévitch, the terrible .	2,000,000 .	10,000,000
1584. Period of his death . .	7,500,000 .	12,000,000
1613. Accession of Michael Romanoff . . .	8,000,000 .	12,000,000
1645. His death	14,000,000 *	13,000,000
1689. Accession of Peter the Great	14,500,000 .	16,000,000
1725. His death . . .	15,000,000 .	20,000,000
1763. Accession of Catherine .	17,500,000 .	25,000,000
1796. Her death . . .	18,200,000 .	33,000,000
1825. Death of Alexander . .	20,500,000 .	55,000,000

If we add the new conquests achieved by Nicholas we shall obtain a superficies of twenty-one square million kilométres, of which five and a-half millions, or at least five millions are comprised in Europe.† In these figures, and in the fifty-five millions of population, Finland is computed.

Including Poland, the Russian monarchy contains sixty millions. To shew the proportion each division holds in these formidable figures, the following table will satisfy public curiosity, if not with minute exactness, yet in a manner nearly approaching to exactitude.

Instead of square kilométres, the surface has been calculated in square versts, but the difference between the two measures is slight. As we have formerly said, the verst is to the kilométre as 1 is to 1·067, the square verst to the square kilométre as 1 is to 1,14.

	Superficies.	Population.
Ancient Muscovy, with its dependencies	3,200,000 .	30,000,000
Little Russia	230,000 .	8,000,000
West Russia	430,000 .	9,000,000

* This increase is owing to the Russian progress in Siberia.

† From recent calculations made in St. Petersburg by M. de Kœppen, and other academicians, this last appears the most exact. M. de Kœppen's calculation is, in square versts, 4,360,358. This is also the result of the tables calculated by us, and which will appear by-and-by. According to the same author the European population is 4,000,000, without counting Finland and Poland.

	Superficies.	Population.
Southern Russia . . .	520,000 .	4,000,000
Trans-Caucasus	180,000 .	1,300,000
Western Siberia . . .	5,272,000 .	1,478,000
Eastern Siberia	8,330,000 .	950,000
Russian America . . .	850,000 .	61,000
	19,012,000	54,789,000
Kingdom of Poland . . .	111,000 .	4,500,000
Great Principality of Finland .	336,700 .	1,380,000
Total . .	19,459,700	60,669,000

(Note 7.) Page 43.

POLITICAL PRETENSIONS OF RUSSIA.

It is not yet time to speak of the pretensions of Russia with regard to the Ottoman empire, upon which—for there we are as yet unable to give positive intelligence—we shall be satisfied by stating another and very different object which she has in view, and this may be done by quoting a passage taken from an article in the "European Pentarchy," p. 351.

"Strange it is that Russia, though possessed of a commerce uniting her to the general interests of the world, has but one great port on the ocean, and that is so circumstanced, that it is in the power of one small nation, the Danes, to blockade it." The writer supposes that Norway cannot refuse the remedy which she possesses against such a state of things. And what is this remedy? Neither more nor less than the cession of the Bay, or Fiord of Folden, to form a naval station for Russia. "She sees the possibility of obtaining this cession, either by an arrangement with the Storthing, or even, if compelled, in a case of vital importance, by force of arms." A word of advice to the peaceful Norwegians! We had ever believed till now, that the pretensions of Russia, well known, as far as regards one of the Scandinavian peninsulas, did not in any way extend to the other. Have we been deceived? Examining the chances of a maritime war between England and Russia, the Pentarchist finds that the latter has not much to fear. "England," says he, "would be less able to disquiet the Russian capital than Russia to produce the same effect as regards London." (p. 352.)

We might multiply these quotations, which are added to those contained in note 4; but we refer the reader to the "Pentarchy," a work which, like the "Portfolio," published at the same time, is filled with the most curious revelations of the secret designs of Russia.

(Note 8.) Page 48.

PRINCE CZARTORYISKI.

It would have been more appropriate when we came to touch upon the Polish Revolution of 1830, to have spoken of the present head of an illustrious family, a man distinguished by character and talent, upon whom the eyes of his scattered countrymen are fixed in hope that he may preside over the restoration of their country, if Providence should have in store for them the realization of their long-cherished wish.

He has been brought so prominently before the world in recent times, by the appeals made to his boundless charity at the Hôtel Lambert, where he resides in Paris; by the supposition that he rendered aid to his countrymen, especially in the last attempt in Gallicia, which caused the sequestration of his property by the Austrian government:* and lastly, in the celebrated work of a contemporary historian, that we have determined to consecrate a few pages to his history, which we introduce at once.

We are anxious, moreover, to place before the eye of the reader some short extracts from the recently published work (vol. 7,) of the "Consulate and the Empire," by M. Thiers, in order that our judgment on the late Emperor Alexander, published previously to that work, may have the sanction of so important an authority.

Adam George Prince Czartoryiski,† born 14th January, 1770, was the son of Prince Adam Casimir, (who was proposed at the same time as his cousin, Stanislaus Poniatowski, as candidate for the elective throne of Poland,) and grandson of Prince Augustus, Palatine of Russia, upon whose character Rulhière, in his history of the anarchy of Poland, has expatiated at great length.

The principal seat of the family was at the castle of Pulawy, a magnificent residence situated on the Vistula, in the Palatinate of Lubin, north-east of the town of that name, celebrated not only for its gardens, but for a magnificent library of more than 80,000

* The Russian Government had previously confiscated his estates, as well in the empire as in the kingdom of Poland.

† Pronounced Schartoriski.

volumes, afterwards delivered up to the hand of the spoiler, which respected nothing in this abode, where had been brought together all that was connected with the recollections of the ancient glory of Poland. The Pulawy estate now forms part of the domains of the crown.

We do not purpose giving here the whole history of the life of Prince Adam George; we shall only repeat what we have said in the text, that he was one of the young companions of the Emperor Alexander, and, after his accession to the throne, became one of the most intimate in the circle of his friends. It was at this time that he was named colleague of the nominal minister for foreign affairs, Count Alexander Woronzow grand chancellor; but Prince Czartoryiski actually fulfilled the functions in concert with his sovereign and friend, who reserved to himself the supreme direction of foreign affairs. It was during his ministry that the rupture with France occurred, upon which the battle of Austerlitz ensued, but which did not terminate with the loss of the action. The jealousy of Russia was excited at seeing the elevation of a Pole; but the emperor soon found means of soothing it, excepting among certain coteries, where the opposition to him was still maintained.

We will now proceed with the extracts to which we have alluded.

"By the side of Alexander," says M. Thiers, (at the camp of Pulawy,) "was Prince Peter Dolgorouki, a young officer entering on his military career, filled with presumption and ambition, a declared enemy to the coterie of the young men of talent,* who governed the empire; he endeavoured to persuade the emperor that these were faithless Russians, who, in the interest of Poland, were betraying Russia. The fickleness of Alexander gave Prince Dolgorouki more than one chance of success. It was false that Prince Adam, the most upright of men, was capable of betraying Alexander.

"But he hated the court of Prussia, whose weakness he mistook for duplicity, and was anxious, with a feeling natural to a Pole, that the projects to attack that court, (still undecided at the moment, and to which Napoleon was offering Hanover as a bribe,) if she did not adhere to the views of the coalition, should be literally carried out; that all relations with her should be broken off; and that sweeping away her raw levies, Warsaw† and Posen, should be wrested from her hands, and Alexander proclaimed king of the re-established kingdom of Poland. Such a wish was natural enough on the part of a Pole, but most ill-judged on that of a statesman. Napoleon, alone, was strong enough to beat the coalition. What would he not be able to effect, if Prussia was com-

* Kotchoubei, Stroganoff, Novociltsoff, Czartoryiski.

† Which fell to the share of Prussia at the last dismemberment.

pelled to be his ally? Moreover, it was asking too much from an irresolute character, like Alexander's."

Resuming the same subject, the historian remarks, "We have said that the Emperor Alexander began to receive new impressions. He was not satisfied with the direction his affairs were taking; he would listen to no advice, for he thought himself cleverer than all his counsellors. Prince Adam Czartoryiski, a man of integrity and gravity, concealing a warm temperament under a cold exterior, became, as we have seen, a troublesome censor of the weakness of the sovereign, and supported opinions calculated to estrange the emperor for ever from him. In his judgment, the monarch had no business with the army. His presence at head quarters, followed by a train of ignorant, volatile, and presumptuous young men, lessened the authority of his generals, as well as their responsibility. His part, according to the prince, was to allow his generals to execute their duties at the head of his armies, and to go and perform his, in the centre of the empire, by supporting public opinion, by administering the resources of the country with energy and assiduity, in order that, by supplying the armies with the sinews of war, he might enable it to prolong the struggle, the only means it had, either to conquer or to balance fortune.

"It was impossible to give more sensible, though at the same time more unpalatable, advice to the emperor. He had tried to play a political part in Europe, in which he had not succeeded as he wished. He saw himself dragged into a contest, which should have filled him with dismay, had not the distance of his country from the scene of events re-assured him. He required the distractions found in the tumult of the camp.

"He was strengthened in his notions by the military coterie surrounding him, at the head of which was Prince Dolgorouki, who, in order to get possession of the emperor, wished to drag him to the army.

"His suite sought to persuade him that he possessed the requisite qualities to command, and that he had but to shew himself, in order to change the fate of the war.

"The wily Koutousoff hazarded a doubt of such being the case; but, *too servile* to maintain his opinion with courage, was careful not to contradict the new possessors of imperial favour. The intrepid Bragathion; the corrupt, but brave, Miloradovitch; the wise Doktoroff; were officers, whose advice certainly merited consideration. None of them were listened to. A German adviser of the Archduke John's, at Hohenlinden, General Weirother, was the only real authority to which the military youths surrounding Alexander deferred."

Finally, we read, in a third extract, "The remonstrances of Prince Czartoryiski, by piquing the pride of Alexander, had

stimulated his courage, and he resolved (8th of March), to make Napoleon wait before he surrendered his sword. Although the representations of his young counsellor were judicious, they were found to be troublesome; and the monarch became so impatient of contradiction, that he sought from the hands of old but incapable servants of the crown, more ready submission and compliance with his wishes.

"It was at this time that the grand counsellor, Count Woronzow, died, and General Baron de Budberg was appointed his successor (17th of June). In consequence of this, Prince Czartoryiski gave in his resignation, and was succeeded, in the place of assistant minister, by Count Alexander Saltikoff; but he continued member of the superior direction of the colleges, and curator of the university district of Wilna. He even accompanied the Emperor Alexander throughout the campaign of 1807, as he had done in 1805."

M. Thiers has evidently drawn his materials from authentic sources; they, moreover, coincide with those furnished to ourselves by an eye-witness of the events, Field Marshal Comte de Stedingk, minister plenipotentiary of Sweden, to the court of Russia, at that period.

"Prince Czartoryiski," he wrote, in 1806, when he had quitted the ministry, "thinks he has gained his point, but he is wide of the mark. His majesty, jealous of his authority, wished the minister to act by the opinions he had himself formed, and which, *being neither decided nor clear*, expose him to endless contradictions, and excite intrigues and cabals which prevent their success. To these causes, we must add the hatred and jealousy of the Russians against the Prince." "Posthumous Memoirs," vol. 2.

It was necessary to appoint a successor to Count Woronzow; and it was most impolitic to name, as grand chancellor, a Pole, who, though no doubt a personal friend of the emperor, was attached to Russia only by that tie, and by the hope of seeing the restoration of unhappy Poland effected under his auspices. To prove, even while in the service of Russia, how completely he was a Pole at heart, we have the testimony of Novociltsoff, his successor, as curator of the university of Wilna, who states, "that he delayed, by at least one hundred years, the fusion of the Lithuanians with the Russians." We reserve, for a future period, the sketch of his conduct, in the insurrection of 1830.

We will observe, in passing, that Budberg was succeeded, as chief of the college, by Count Nicholas Roumantsoff; and Woronzow, by Prince Alexander Kourakin; subsequently (in 1807—1812), ambassador in Paris.

(Note 9.) Page 51.

CORRUPTION.

We shall furnish more ample details on the subject, which heads this note, in the next volume, (chapter iv.,) but, in the mean time, we give an extract from an anonymous English work, called "Revelations of Russia."

We borrow from the French translation of Mr. Noblet, (v. i. p. 149, and following,) and pass over many details previously recounted.

"The Emperor Alexander, whose character presents a singular mixture of liberal views, benevolence, and finesse, joined to indolent weakness, surrendered himself and his empire up to the mercy of favourites, and was perfectly cognizant of the corruption of the social system. Flattery could never persuade him that he was a Peter the Great, or a Napoleon; he, consequently, never attempted the most difficult reforms.

"He knew, that to enter upon them with any chance of success, he must commence by increasing, ten-fold, the salaries of the *employés*, of which the situation of his finances did not admit; and by granting the liberty of the press, which his ministers would have regarded as the insane act of freemasonry. Wanting the necessary energy to discuss the question with his council, though he knew how odious and impolitic its conduct was, with regard to those abuses, he avoided stirring the mountain of social iniquities: yet he saw it exactly as it stood, and was sensible that, unless he could eradicate the evil, every act of severity would be useless.

"He therefore allowed corruption to stalk forth into the broad light, instead of compelling it, as Nicholas has done, to veil itself from the public gaze. The only vengeance he inflicted on the open robberies of his servants, was cool biting irony, leaving to his ministers the care of detecting, and the trouble of punishing them. He deliberately said, speaking of his subjects, 'Did they know but where to conceal them, they would steal my ships of war; and, could they draw my teeth without awakening me, they would steal them while I slept.' Is this saying of Alexander's recorded by an author of undisputed gravity, correct? We will not assert it, but it matters little, since it characterizes the real state of the nation. Witnesses, both respectable and numerous, attest the last.

"For the moment, we will produce but one,—he is, we must admit, a Pole,—but a Pole well known for his love of justice and truth, Count Stanislaus Plater, brother of Count Louis, recently lost to his country.

"'Russia,' he says in a pamphlet,* 'has on numerous occasions given proof of great political character, to which we cannot render too much praise.'

In addition to many estimable qualities, much private virtue is displayed by the inhabitants of the vast Muscovy. But enlightened Russia will agree with us, or rather she will announce with shame, that there does not exist in Europe a more immoral system of government; one, which based upon the most shameless venality, has reduced it to a tacit conventional system and habit, which has ceased to shock, and has reached such a pitch, that many persons in Russia cannot conceive it possible for an *employé* to be an honest man. This conviction overwhelmed the last days of the Emperor Alexander with grief and melancholy. It was this which excited the imagination of the conspirators of 1825, who, penetrated with the sense of the necessity of reform, and dreaming of a better order of things, thought the most frightful overthrow of government preferable to this organized system of corruption. Wherever the Russian government has been introduced, venality has taken root."

(Note 10.) Page 52.

GENERAL COUNT ARAKTCHEÏEFF.

The difficulty which exists in writing on subjects or persons connected with the interior of Russia is great. The absence of publicity, the paucity of materials, unless a person has been an eye-witness of facts, or been fortunate enough to obtain a clue to the hidden spring of action, confine his knowledge to exterior events alone, such as they are given forth to the public.

A more difficult task still, is to write the biography of a Russian statesman, whose life, spent in the execution of duties in the interior of the country, has never been subjected to be canvassed by the journals, or by foreigners. It is rarely that his name is to be met with. It has appeared only at rare intervals in the public papers, which are before publication submitted to a severe censorship. We are puzzled to know how far we may attach personal responsibility to his actions. In Russia it is the sovereign alone who acts; without his sanction, his ministers are non-entities, they are but instruments of his will, deprived of free action, and consequently devoid of merit and free from responsibility.

The responsibility for evils is attached to none; it cannot

* "Les Polonais au Tribunal de l'Europe."

be entertained; strict command to forget them is enjoined, and their very traces are effaced, or plunged into the waters of Lethe;—they rarely rise to the surface to appear in evidence against those who have assisted in accomplishing wrongs or injustice. The press strictly watched, and servile in its nature, respects the injunction. There are some few cotemporary biographers existing in Russia, but they contain merely the various commissions held, the nominations to office, and successive marks of imperial favour; the facts which might cause embarrassment are left out; no opinion or judgment is passed; on all points legitimate curiosity is baffled. In order to verify the truth of these allegations, let us cast an eye upon the brief notices of which the mysterious personage with whom we are engaged, has been the subject.

From the evidence of these, there exists not a doubt but that he played an important part in state affairs during the greater portion of the reign of Alexander.

The facts we collected during our sojourn in Russia, are deeply engraven on our memory.

So recently as 1825 every one trembled in the presence of Araktchéïeff, his name was in every mouth, every act of severity and oppression which overshadowed the last ten years of the life of Alexander, a monarch in his own impulses noble and generous, was laid at his door.

To the greater number of our readers, probably, the name of Count Araktchéïeff is unknown; it is one they never heard mentioned, and which they are doubtless astonished to see at the head of an historical notice. What has Araktchéïeff done, they will ask, to deserve such honour? and is it really worth the trouble to allude to him?

We find it difficult, nay, impossible, to trace in detail a career barely visible through glimmerings of light, and which government seeks to keep in darkness. But the notice we can offer is important; it will establish the ideas which are entertained in Russia of the immense influence which General Araktchéïeff exercised during so many years.

The author of "the *Revelations of Russia*," foreseeing that the same question which we have above supposed might be put to himself, introduces it, and the following is his answer, which we will content ourselves with copying, without taking upon ourselves the resposibility for the language, facts, or reflections:—

"If the reader," says he, "had lived in Russia during the reign of Alexander, he would no more have ventured to ask such a question, than a Frenchman in the reign of Louis XIV. would have done respecting Richelieu. Araktchéïeff governed the monarch and the empire. As with Richelieu, his intentions at the commencement of his power were good; but his practice joined the

crafty severity of the priest to the sombre cruelty of the oriental vizier.

He concceived the plan, and laid the foundation of those celebrated military colonies which would have threatened the peace of the world, or have obliged other countries to adopt an analogous system for their own defence, had they not at their commencement become dangerous to the imperial government. Araktchéïeff who governed the emperor, and through him the empire, was himself governed by a mistress, a demon in human form, who led him into the most cruel excesses. At length the woman was assassinated by one of her slaves, whose sister she had ordered to be flogged in a moment of caprice.

"The victim had been her favourite, brought up by her with the greatest care, in the midst of luxury and magnificence. Araktchéïeff, to punish the murder, had all his servants put to the torture, and as the penalty of death has been abolished in Russia since the reign of Elizabeth, save in cases of high-treason, they were subsequently knouted. Those who survived were sent to a remote city, the governor of which was one of his creatures, and condemned to receive ten times the amount of punishment they were able to endure."

This answer will no doubt be deemed sufficient, and perhaps the reader will now follow us with interest while we detail facts, incomplete in spite of our long researches, but which may enable others by their assistance to fill up our unfinished sketch.

During the reign of Catherine II., there lived in a little village in the government of Novogorod, a poor country gentleman, who after having spent some years in the service, had retired with the rank of major, and made the most of a modest patrimony barely sufficient to support him. His name was Andrew Araktchéïeff. We have not learnt whether he was related to Major-General Vassili Araktchéïeff who served in the reign of the Empress Anne in 1736, 1737, 1738, under Munnich, and who gave him the character of "an intrepid warrior, upon whom he could count in the day of battle."

The major had a son born 28th September, 1769,* who was christened by the name of Alexis. He destined him for the army, for it is the custom in Russia for every nobleman to pass some years of his life in the service. After giving his son under his own roof the limited means of instruction afforded by a Russian village, which consisted of reading, writing, and arithmetic, he took him to St. Petersburg, in the hope of getting him into the corps of the artillery cadets of the army, but the amount of money required exceeded his means, and though the benevolent metropo-

* The dates are according to the old style.

litan Gabriel, chief of the diocese, assisted him with a small sum, he would have been obliged to renounce his projects had he not succeeded in procuring the interest of General Melissino, a man of influence, and son of the curator of the University of Moscow.

Thanks to their assistance, the major returned home satisfied.

Received into the corps of cadets, Alexis Andreïevitch gave proof of talent, and made rapid progress in mathematics and military science, but he shewed no love of letters, and learned no language but his own, though French at that time was much in vogue among the higher class, and the Russians possess wonderful facility in acquiring foreign tongues. He occupied his time principally with the details of military discipline. This zeal gave satisfaction to his superiors, and in 1787 he obtained a commission. Melissino did not lose sight of his *protegé;* he recommended him to the Count (latterly Prince) Nicholas Saltikoff, who enjoyed great credit with the Grand-Duke Paul, and had the superintendence of the education of the princes his sons.* Saltikoff made the young Araktchéïeff join his pupils in their lessons on fortification and artillery; he observed his assiduity, his exactness in performing his duty, and his strict attention to the rules and regulations, and soon conceived a friendship for him. It was in great part owing to the patronage of the prince, that Araktchéïeff acquired the favour of the heir to the crown of the Czars, into whose service he was soon to enter.

The favourite residence of Paul was Gotchina, a small village fifty-seven versts to the south of St. Petersburg, where Prince Gregory Orloff had built an immense chateau, bought from him by the Empress Catherine, and given by her to her son.

This chateau, the country residence of the young grand-duke and duchess, Paul had turned into a regular citadel, flanked by towers, surrounded by ditches, communicating with the garden by drawbridges, and garrisoned by a particular force. At Gotchina shortly before that time, a foundling hospital had been opened, which is still in existence, and upon which Maria Foëdorovna, that benefactress of the poor, bestowed the tender interest of a mother. The grand-duke had subjected these orphans to a military organization, and in 1793 he applied to General Melissino to send him an artillery officer to drill one company for that department of the service. Araktchéïeff was fixed upon; and from that epoch dates the commencement of his fortune.

The skill he displayed in making fire-works; above all, his haughtiness, and the strictness with which he submitted and caused others to submit to military discipline, recommended him to the notice of Paul, a man like himself of a stubborn and tyrannical disposition. Araktchéïeff was grovelling and insinuating,

* See Appendix of the following volume.

in his demeanour to the grand-duke, and succeeded in gaining his affection, became necessary to him, and soon inspired him with unbounded confidence.

In 1796, he was appointed director to the military orphans of Gotchina, a situation which brought him into daily contact with his master.

The same year died Catherine II., and to her magnificent reign succeeded another different from it in every respect. Paul was not only capricious and violent, but his temper had been soured, and his feelings wounded; he did not love his mother, to whose actions the most painful reminiscences were attached.

He was thus disposed to undo all that she had done, and generally done well, for Catherine had the *coup d'œil* of genius. Scarcely had Paul ascended the throne than he incorporated the companies of Gotchina with the different regiments of his guard, among which he distributed their officers, advancing them two or three grades. This proceeding excited murmurs: Russia in those days had not yet become fashioned to that excessive obedience to arbitary commands, which now distinguishes her; many officers demanded their *congé*, but Paul did not heed them.

Before the close of the year, Araktchéïeff was made colonel, military governor of St. Petersburg, major general, major in the regiment Préobrajensk, and grand cross of the order of St. Anne. The following year he was made a baron, and received the grand cross of St. Alexander Nevski,—a distinction rarely granted to a young man of twenty-eight years of age. Further, the emperor gave him 2000 peasants, and left him the choice of the land on which they should be located; the favourite decided in favour of Grausino in the government of Novogorod.

For what distinguished services did Araktchéïeff merit these accumulated honours? History is silent on the subject, and Russian biographers are careful to avoid it. But if Masson may be believed, who is in truth suspected of exaggeration, the happy parvenu owed his titles to the following characterstics. "He is (wrote in 1807, the author of the 'Secret Memoirs'), a man of the most revolting brutality, which he exercised upon the cadets (the orphans?).

"Never was epic poet more dreadfully tormented by the god of song, than this man by his military demon. His fury, his punishments have caused the death of more than one unfortunate soldier under the very eyes of Paul. This executioner has introduced into the Russian service a barbarity till his time unknown; he insults and strikes the officers on the parade." If the causes for such extraordinary favour have not been cleared up, the fact is not less authenticated.

Under a passionate, fantastical, and suspicious sovereign like

Paul, no one could say what his fate might be on the morrow, and the highest credit did not protect a man from the most overwhelming strokes of fortune.

Araktchéïeff was not sole favourite; without speaking of Koutousoff and of Rostoptchin, there was Count Pahlen, a man of energetic character and enlightened mind, active in his duties, and not of a character to brook a rival, whose underhand dealings might bring him into danger.

Araktchéïeff, abruptly dismissed in March, 1798, was recalled the following August, and named quarter-master-general; he was entrusted in January, 1799, with the command of a battalion of artillery of the guards, was appointed inspector-general and made moreover, commander of Malta, and count of the Russian empire.

On the 1st of October, of the same year, he received for the second time orders to quit the court: we know as little the reasons for this, as for his former banishment, but we fancy the influence of Count Pahlen had much to do with his disgrace. During his absence the conspiracy was planned, having for its object the dethronement of Paul, which was, however, only effected by shortening the days of the unhappy monarch.

Araktchéïeff was at ten leagues' distance from the capital, at the head of his battalion when he received the message which recalled him.

Paul, either warned by a secret communication, or guided by instinct, dreaded a plot, and was a prey to terror; he sent in all haste for the disgraced favourite, in order to have a confidential man by his side to defend him against his enemies. Unfortunately he was too late; when he reached the gates of St. Petersburg, Araktchéïeff found them closed. Some assert that the audacious minister of Paul stopped the messenger with the despatch addressed to the count, and took possession of it.

Araktchéïeff had been long known to Alexander, by whose order he was now named military governor of the capital. We have heard that he saw him some time after the catastrophe, and that they wept together over the tragic death of Paul. Giving vent to the accents of devotedness and sincerity, Araktchéïeff spoke with much vehemence, cursed his own absence at such a moment, declaring that but for it, the crime would never have been committed, for he would have rendered abortive the plans of the conspirators, and would have put them all to death. Alexander was touched by the sincerity of his grief, and conceived from that hour a high opinion of him: he resolved to attach him to his person, whilst Pahlen, who was an object of detestation to the empress-mother, was sent away to his government of Livonia.

Reinstated in his functions as inspector-general of artillery, and confirmed as commandant of the battalion of the artillery of the

guard, Araktchéïeff made great changes in this arm of the service. He raised it from the miserable state it was in at that period and placed it on a level with that of the armies of other countries most advanced in this respect, especially the French, to which it was soon opposed, first at Dirnstein and Austerlitz, and subsequently at Eylau and Friedland. His reward for these services was the high post of general (in chief) of the artillery, the intermediate grade between lieutenant-general and field-marshal. The attachment of the young autocrat to Araktchéïeff increased daily. Knowing that his neglected education disqualified him from mingling in high life, where he would not be respected, and which prevented his filling the highest offices, he looked upon him as a safe man, as a man devoted to himself; often took his advice, and entrusted him with confidential functions during the frequent absences he was forced to make at this period.

On the 13th of January, 1808, Araktchéïeff was named minister of war, in succession to General Sergius Kasmitch; but this difficult post, which brought him into contact with a brilliant corps of officers, and with generals principally formed in the schools of the west, suited ill either with his habits or talents. He held it only till 1810, and was succeeded by the wise Barclay de Tolly, better adapted by his general information, and profound knowledge of the art of war, worthily to preside over so vast an administration. The count, moreover, had been named inspector-general of all the infantry and artillery; the commissariat department was likewise placed under his charge. After the imperial council was reorganized, he was chosen president of the department, which in this important body is devoted to military affairs. Relieved from the duties of the war-office, he remained member of a committee of ministers, was appointed to a seat in the senate, and enjoyed almost the exclusive privilege of free *entré* to the emperor. Nothing was effected without him, and yet his name never appeared officially; the emperor congratulated himself on having a minister so safe and convenient, and approved of everything he did. "He was the prime counsellor of the sovereign," says his biographer and his friend; without explaining to what the intimate connection between them was owing.

The same biographer pronounces a high eulogium on his disinterestedness; and in the eyes of his master who knew the venality of Russian functionaries, this quality was his most powerful recommendation. He did not carry it so far as to neglect the legitimate care of his own fortune, for, as we shall subsequently see, the inheritance of the poor retired major formed a portion of it scarcely perceptible.

The count took little part in the events of 1812, and did not accompany the emperor abroad. Important duties retained

him in the capital, where he appears to have held extensive powers.

It was by his advice that Alexander on his return to his empire, from which war and diplomacy had long detained him, made the first experiment of the military colonies, with a view, as we have said at an earlier page, to maintain a considerable force without too severely burdening the treasury. This idea was borrowed from Austria, in which country establishments of this nature had existed for a century, and given much satisfaction. According to Araktcheïeff, the fusion of the peasants of the crown with certain regiments scattered among them in the more thinly populated governments where a portion of the land was lying fallow, would produce great advantages.

There would be, 1st., a saving of expense, for the colonizing soldier would contribute to his own support by his labours in the field, and secure a provision for the wants of old age without requiring a pension; secondly, a perceptible increase in the population in the national resources and civilization of the empire. 3. A remedy against the difficulties of the recruiting system, always great in a country where man is the most valuable possession of the landed interests, and against the dilatoriness which had ever occurred even in collecting the most inconsiderable force.

This establishment seemed moreover to promise an increase of the army; it would furnish schools of discipline, the only means of imparting some instruction to the rural population. Applied at first to a limited number of regiments, colonization was to be afterwards extended to the whole army. Four to six millions of souls, or male serfs of the crown, would be added to it, to establish depôts, among which the soldiers might be distributed, and form an army of reserve, composed of enrolled peasants. Carried out on so large a scale, the undertaking would have been pregnant with danger to the peace of Europe, where the intelligence of the plan was received with much sensation.

It might, however,—and events were not long in proving it—sow the elements of discord and civil war in Russia herself; insurrection among the peasantry; and military commotions might be the alternate result in the different countries composing the empire. The military colonies never have assumed, and never will assume, such colossal dimensions, but the plan was nevertheless realized upon an extensive scale.

At the commencement of the experiment the government was timid, and the ukase, 26th April, 1818, which bore the date of the scheme was not propagated.

The first regiment colonized was the grenadiers of Count Araktcheïeff; it was located near the lake Ilmen, in the government

of Novogorod, on the borders of the Volkhoff, but it had very great difficulties to struggle with. On the 1st. Jan., 1822, a division consisting of six regiments had received a colonial organization; other ukases bearing upon the subject, were published the 12th December, 1822, and the 18th of February, 1825. At the expiration of ten years, 60,000 men, and nearly 30,000 horse, were located on the crown lands, in the midst of a population of 400,000 male peasants; the infantry in the government of Novogorod, the cavalry in that of Karkoff, or the Slobodes of the Ukraine of Kherson, and of Jékatérinoslaff.

The first cost of the establishment and subsequent expenses, had not attained, on the death of Alexander, the sum of 35,000,000 of roubles.

The originator of the project was appointed chief of all the establishments of infantry and director of the military colonies in general.

The emperor moreover entrusted him with the direction of the military cantonments, that is, the assemblage of all the sons of soldiers, (*enfans de troupes,*) which had been till then attached to the *état-major*.

All these innovations were unpopular, and added to the dislike inspired by the mysterious favourite of Alexander—a dislike so much the more violent, that his severity in the exercise of almost unbounded power, was not redeemed by the brilliant qualities generally found among Russians of the higher class, or by the *prestige* inspired by the energetic execution of difficult duties of which a man bears the avowed responsibility. Every thing done contrary to the spirit of the age, and in discordance with the apparent intentions and characteristics of Alexander, was attributed to General Araktchéïeff.

Speaking no language but his own, and generally ignorant, he took no pleasure in intellectual enjoyments, and entertained no respect for labours of the mind: he was a personification of old Russia.

The public did not fail to make him responsible for the retrograde movement which marked the close of the life of the emperor, and which dated from the moment when, at the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, the influence of Prince Metternich succeeded in correcting his somewhat liberal tendencies.

From that moment the censorship became more and more scrupulously severe: various journals were suppressed; a most injurious inquisition was exercised in the heart of the universities; the students were subjected to irksome formalities; and the malevolence against the professors reached such a length, that many were suspended from their functions, a circumstance that happened to Messieurs Arsénieff, Halitch, Herrman, and Rawpach, (December

1821), in a word, to the enlarged and elevated views which had up to this moment dictated the system of public instruction, succeeded a jealous, suspicious, and harassing control. Two high functionaries in this department, Messrs. Rounitch and Magnitzki, had the credit of being the most zealous promoters of the new order of things, the most inveterate enemies of the free march of mind. Excessive unpopularity was attached to their names; and as they belonged to the intimate circle of the favourite, all the odium which they incurred was visited upon him. Entrusted with the duty of watching over the life of his master, Araktchéïeff exercised a most active and arbitrary *surveillance;* people trembled before him; the supposed presence of his agents in public society substituted for interchange of ideas and flow of soul the most frivolous conversation. Nor was this the only restrictive police; —that of the Governor-General Miloradovitch often came into contact with it; and there was a third police attached to the secret cabinet connected with the post-office department under the charge of Prince Alexander Galitsin.

Araktchéïeff's unpopularity, far from injuring him in the eyes of the emperor, rendered the favourite more dear to him. A man without friends or family, without interest, who had taken no root in the soil, who held no place in society, without support, save that of his sovereign, belonged to the monarch body and soul, and inspired him with unlimited confidence.

The military colonies indeed did not realize the expectations formed concerning them; and the serious commotions which had occurred in them, shewed the dangers to which they exposed the empire; but the originator had not staked his political existence upon their prosperity; on the contrary, he soon began to entertain doubts as to the propriety of maintaining them. Araktchéïeff was necessary to Alexander in other respects, and especially to his indolence, the result of moral lassitude and religious melancholy. The emperor was well pleased to throw upon him the principal cares and anxieties of the conduct of the state. He furnished him with full power during his frequent absences, recommended him to have an eye upon every thing, and to keep him *au fait* of all his movements. During one journey which preceded but a few months his departure to Taganrog, a crime was committed at Grousino, which called the attention of the world to the disorders of the private life of the favourite, and contributed to hasten his downfall.

The reader has already learnt from an extract given at the commencement of this note, that Araktchéïeff had a mistress who ruled *him*, as *he* did the emperor.

She was the wife of a sailor, a woman of haughty and imperious character, avaricious, and hated for her cruelty. Yet she was

courted, and her interest was solicited; the head of the police paid her the most marked attention, and even men of the first families did not blush to memorialize her, and to flatter her pride and avarice by presents. Naturally cruel, she exercised her authority over the serfs who waited upon her with the utmost barbarity. One day an unfortunate attendant, for whom up to that time she had shewn marked preference, had the misfortune to offend her mistress.

Carried away by the violence of her temper, the "sultana" ordered her poor servant to be whipped, and the cruel order was carried into execution. Her conduct did not remain long unpunished. The brother of the victim, exasperated by the sight of her sufferings, swore to avenge the outrage offered to his sister: he armed himself with a knife, watched his opportunity, and assassinated the favourite: in vain did she utter the most piteous cries; no one went to her assistance.

This occurrence caused a profound sensation; but Araktchéïeff, little moved by the public scandal, listened only to the voice of rage. He hastened to Grousino, displayed the most frantic grief, threw himself into the grave destined for his unfortunate mistress, abstained from food for many days, allowed his beard to grow, and remained for some time in a state bordering on madness, forgetting everything but his thirst for vengeance.

We have already spoken of Photius and the convent of St. George. This convent, founded at the commencement of the twelfth century, had recently been rebuilt, and rose upon a piece of arid land, two leagues from Novogorod, where the Volkhoff discharges itself through lake Ilmen.

There is nothing comparable to the interior magnificence of its churches, owing in a great measure to the reputed sanctity of Photius, as well as the pious generosity of one of its richest penitents, the Countess Anne Orloff Schesmenskoï. The iconastase of gilt-bronze in the principal church reaches the cupola. Among the pictures, those of Christ and the Virgin are encircled with crowns, sparkling with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones, and the finest pearls. Candelabras of silver-gilt are placed before them, and not far off is a colossal statue of St. George, wrought in silver. The bindings of the evangelists and missals are of silver-gilt, with enamelled medallions representing subjects from the Bible. Upon a beautiful balustrade is the following inscription,—"Here the Emperor Alexander, accompanied by Count Araktchéïeff and other personages of his household, offered up prayers, prostrate by the side of Photius."

In the treasury (riznitsa) of the monastery are preserved objects of incredible value, mitres covered with pearls and precious stones, copes in gold, brocade of great value, crosses, crucifixes,

crosses for the neck, chalices and covers, pictures of saints, figures worked in onyx, altar-cloths, &c.

It is only in monasteries of the first order, called Laura, in the subterranean (Petcherski) of Kief, and in that of the Trinity (Troïtza), under the patronage of St. Sergius, and that of St. Alexander Nevski, that such collections of riches are preserved by the church in monasteries, the members of which take vows of abstinence and poverty.

Photius, (in Russian, Foti) the archimandrid of the convent, lived in obedience to his vows in the midst of all this splendour. He was in the odour of sanctity, and attracted pilgrims from all quarters — even from the upper class: the emperor had visited him; and Photius knew how to make his voice heard when occasion required it. One day he repaired unsummoned to the winter palace; it was at the time when Prince Alexander Galitsin was minister of public instruction and worship.

Being admitted to the presence of the sovereign, he told his imperial majesty that the church was in a state of danger, that foreign doctrines had been introduced, and that the simplicity of the old faith was menaced; he exhorted the monarch to allay the storm, and put an end to the abuses.

Shortly afterwards the appointment of Prince Galitsin was cancelled, and to the Holy Synod alone was confided the management of ecclesiastical affairs. Photius had obtained the same ascendency over Count Araktchéïeff. Alexander learning the deplorable condition to which his favourite had been reduced by the loss of his mistress, applied to the monk for assistance to rouse him from his dejected state. He addressed to him a letter: "He had learnt (he told him) that Araktchéïeff was a prey to despair. That he (Photius) alone could prevent the fatal consequences to be apprehended from it; he, whose words full of holy unction, and whose unblemished life had recalled so many stray sheep to the fold;—he conjured him from the depths of his heart to exert his powers:" and continued, "Summon him to your side, speak to him in the name of religion, strengthen his faith, exhort him to take care of himself for the sake of his country, to which he is of such consequence. You will preserve to her a peerless servant, and to me a faithful friend to whom I am sincerely attached." The man of God complied with the wishes of the monarch; he invited the favourite to come to him. Araktchéïeff went, and remained some weeks in the holy retreat, performed penance, and regained calmness. But his thirst for vengeance did not yield to the influence of religion, the first law of which enjoins forgiveness of injuries.

The assassin, whom rage had impelled to strike the blow, was not the only culprit: in order to perform the deed he had required accomplices, and had found them among his comrades, who all

hated their tyrannical mistress. The accused were one-and-twenty in number, and that circumstance brought the case within the jurisdiction of the senate. To withdraw them from the higher tribunal, the count had them tried on the spot of their guilt in lots of seven each. In contempt of existing laws, many were broken on the wheel, and all sentenced. Alexander in the meanwhile had taken the journey to Taganrog, and Araktchéïeff remained at his post. He was not yet consoled for the loss he had sustained, when he was overwhelmed by the news of the death of his beloved master. The act of grace before mentioned could not fail to be announced on the day of the accession of the new monarch. It would have saved the unfortunate beings upon whom General Araktchéïff's vengeance had fallen, from the dreadful punishment of the knout. Banishment to Siberia was not he thought sufficient punishment, and he hastened the preparations for enforcing the sentence, which was carried out with all rigour on the very eve of the publication of the amnesty. Nicholas, when informed of the transaction, was incensed: he ordered a revision of the trial, which took place in March 1827, and he immediately evinced a coolness towards the general, which warned him that his reign was past.

It is, however, a rare event for the favourite of one sovereign to keep his place with the successor: he is generally made responsible for all the evil committed up to that period, and by his banishment a species of satisfaction is given the country, which ensures a temporary popularity to the new monarch, and at the same time removes from memory the painful reminiscences connected with the deceased ruler. Whatever weight these reflections may have, Nicholas, as we have seen, had a high sense of justice, and felt incensed at the outrageous conduct of the general; when another cause hastened the downfall of a man hitherto all-powerful. Araktchéïeff had a natural son, whom he had placed in the horse-artillery of the guard, and whom the Emperor Alexander had at his request made one of his aides-de-camp. The young man proved himself unworthy of such distinction, having early in 1826 insulted, without cause, an old man in the principal theatre of St. Petersburg. The emperor dismissed him from the guards, sent him to a distant garrison, and stigmatized in the garrison orders of the day "the immorality of his conduct."

The father now thought it prudent to withdraw. Having asked permission to travel, leave was immediately granted him, to which a gratuity of 50,000 roubles was added by Nicholas: this sum Araktchéïeff, according to his Russian biographer, distributed in charity.

He left St. Petersburg in the month of June, 1826: after having once more visited the military colonies, he started for Berlin and Dresden, and thence to Paris. We have been assured that on

crossing the French frontier Araktchéïeff's insolence drew upon him a reprimand from one of the *employés* at the custom-house, and caused Charles X. to refuse him an audience.

His residence in a foreign country had scarcely lasted a few months, when the emperor, glad to seize the first plausible pretext, informed him that his prolonged absence made new arrangements necessary. He was deprived of the direction of the military colonies, and several other situations held by him were given away; but the presidency over the committee of military affairs in the Council of the Empire he preserved to the last.

A ukase of the 11th November (30th October) decided that the infantry general, Prince Chakhofskoï, in his quality of commandant of the corps of grenadiers, should assume the command of all the military colonies established at Novogorod, which were thenceforward to bear the name of the Corps of Colonized Grenadiers; that the powers of this general officer should be assimilated to those of a commander of a detached corps; that the same powers should be exercised by Lieutenant-General Count de Witt, chief of the colonies established in the government of Kherson and Jékaterinosloff. An état-major was especially created for the colonized grenadiers; and the principal état-major, as well as the economical committee of the military colonies, were united to the general staff of the emperor under the command of Baron Diebitsch. When the count received the news of these changes in Paris, he was engaged in causing the construction of a large clock in bronze, surmounted by a bust of Alexander; it was to strike but once a day, at the hour when the monarch had expired, and then to perform the beautiful prayer "Peace amid the blessed" (so sviatymi au hokaï). He immediately made preparations to return. We are assured that on the 18th December, 1826, he presented a memorial to the emperor respecting the military colonies, drawn up by him for his predecessor Alexander. If we may believe the extract inserted in the "Ephémeredes Geographiques" of Weimar, the following is nearly the substance of it.

Contrary to every expectation, it states, seven-eighths of the colonized soldiers fall to the charge of government; the male children of one district do not suffice to complete the recruiting of the regiment: the state is obliged to sacrifice the whole of the revenue arising from its lands, and the peasants are everywhere dissatisfied with their new position. To extend colonization to the whole army would absorb four thousand million roubles, supposing the government able to devote so enormous a sum to that purpose. This attempt to excite the interest of the young monarch produced no change in the treatment Nicholas had hitherto shewn towards the confidant of his brother: he had determined to dispense with his services.

Araktchéïeff resigned himself to his fate, not without causing it to be understood that he possessed the means of avenging his disgrace. He thought for a moment of publishing in foreign countries the numerous letters written to him by the hand of Alexander himself, which he preserved as his most precious possession in the world, including the one formerly written in his favour to the Archimandrid of St. George.

Russia has scarcely ever witnessed an example of serious opposition to the will of the autocrat on the part of a subject: that recently offered by Ivan Golovin is the first of which we ever heard. The fallen vizïer was silent, and retired to his estate at Grousino.

Such was the opinion formed respecting the nature of his disgrace, that the civil governor of Novogorod did not dare allow him to prolong his sojourn in that city, which is itself an image of fallen splendour. The emperor disapproved of the conduct of the governor, and Count Orloff, who was ordered to reprimand him, took that opportunity of repairing to Grousino in full uniform to pay a visit to the general.

From that period Araktchéïeff, buried in profound solitude, devoted the remainder of his life to rural economy and acts of benevolence. He dedicated a temple at Grousino in honour of his beloved master; preserved most scrupulously, in the state in which they had been left, the rooms which the emperor had sometimes occupied; displayed under a glass-case all the presents he had received at his hands, all that might recall his memory; among them were those precious letters of which we have spoken. He instituted many foundations, and deposited in the district bank a sum of 50,000 paper roubles;* the interest of which was to be accumulated during three years, and then be devoted for 100 years, that is till 1925, to awarding an annual prize to the author of the best history of the reign of Alexander. The Imperial Academy of Science at St. Petersburg was to award it.

He appropriated a capital of 300,000 roubles to the cadet corps of Novogorod, the interest of which sum was to pay the expenses of several young men belonging to noble but impoverished families of Novogorod and of Tver. He shewed much benevolence towards the peasants, and if his long political career gives him no claim to the gratitude of his country at large, he secured at least the blessings of numerous individuals whose position he ameliorated.

When he was taken ill in 1834, he had been preparing himself, by the aid of religion, for his passage from this material world to that, where he hoped to join the beloved object of his long devoted-

* It was in 1839 that the silver rouble, which is worth three roubles, fifty kopeks, (rather more than four francs French money,) was declared to be the principal unity of money in circulation in the empire.

ness. After placing in the church of his village a monument, where the image of the emperor was seen crowned by faith, hope and charity, he wrote to a friend, "I have finished my task: I can now go into the presence of the Emperor Alexander with my report in my hand.* Nicholas, on hearing of his illness, hastened to send his physician, Sir James Wylie, to Grousino; but the aid of art was powerless, the patient's strength was exhausted. He died on the 21st April (3rd May), 1834, keeping his eyes fixed to the last on the portrait of Alexander suspended in front of his bed. He was 65 years of age. He was buried in the village church, where he had prepared his own monument, near a bust of Paul I.

Independently of real property, Count Araktchéïeff left 1,800,000 roubles contained in a parcel, the charge of which had, during the lifetime of his benefactor, been entrusted to the senate, and in which there was a sort of will. In case he should die without naming an heir, Araktchéïeff begged the emperor to condescend to take that trouble upon himself, contenting himself with bequeathing various sums to different purposes.

As he did not subsequently name an heir, Nicholas chose as such the cadet corps of Novogorod. This military establishment was to be put into possession of Grousino, with its dependencies, charged with educating a number of young people in the name of the deceased.

Thus the good deeds of Araktchéïeff live after him; and if the judgment of his cotemporaries be severe, perhaps his memory may find favour with a future generation less interested in the questions of the day, less struck with the contrast which a favourite, wanting in those brilliant qualities conferred by a finished education and the usages of the world, presented to his master, who formed a perfect model in these respects, and was one of the most amiable, most enlightened and best-intentioned men of which our age can boast.

Count Araktchéïeff had, in reality, too much of the original character of his country to be broken in by civilization; but he possessed some good qualities, one especially, which no one can deny him—unbounded fidelity and devotedness, which extended beyond the grave. His motto was, "Devotion without flattery." If his attachment to Alexander was great, it was neither sordid nor servile; it took its source in deep gratitude, and in the feeling natural to a Russian with regard to his sovereign, who is to him an image of God on earth.

Araktchéïeff was indefatigable in the service of his master, and, although taking a main part in affairs, he remained so far con-

* When a Russian functionary appears before his superior he is obliged to present him with his report: it is a custom frequently reduced to a simple formality.

cealed that his name scarcely appears in the countless actions of a reign of twenty-five years.

This modesty served well his interests; for in spite of his honourable intentions, we cannot say the favourite was the emperor's good angel: he kept his jealousy and suspicions alive, without endeavouring to make him comprehend the true nature of his mission.

(Note 11.) Page 58.

THE TREATY OF TILSIT.

Concluded the 7th July, 1807, put an end to the war between France and Russia. It was followed by a compact between the two empires, of which the 8th article says, "If, in consequence of the recent changes which have occurred at Constantinople,* the Porte shall not accept the mediation of France, or if having accepted it, it shall happen that during the course of three months the negotiations are not brought to a satisfactory conclusion, France will make common cause with Russia against the Ottoman Porte, and the two high contracting powers will concert measures to withdraw all the provinces of the Ottoman empire in Europe (Constantinople and the province of Rumélia excepted) from the yoke and vexations of the Turk."

Secret stipulations were, moreover, made; but Bignon, who has examined the treaty, does not think there were any relative to the eventual partition of Turkey. The idea expressed in the 8th article of the treaty was doubtless developed in conversation, or by correspondence; there was a conditional understanding on the subject between Alexander and Napoleon, but nothing was further written or signed. "The possibility," adds the diplomatic historian, "of a partition was an hypothesis essentially subordinate to an event which did not occur, the refusal of the mediation of France by the Ottoman court."

The Emperor Napoleon was soon disenchanted of a project when he perceived the advantages were not on his side.

When the order he had given General Sebastiani reached Constantinople, the ambassador had regained with Sultan Mustapha a portion of the influence he had enjoyed with Selim. The memorial he drew up was opposed to all partition. Bignon admits, however, that the secret articles in question circulated by England and

* The deposition of Selim III., replaced by Mustapha.

forwarded by her to Constantinople as having been concluded between Napoleon and Alexander, approaches very nearly to the plan sketched by the two emperors.

"La Biographie Universelle" of Michaud, under the head of Alexander I. (in the supplement) gives the following *resumé* of these articles, stating they were published for the first time by it. Although they may not be authentic, they are important, especially if they be compared with the projects of the Abbé Piatoli, concerning the relations of Russia with Turkey, so well characterized by M. Thiers.

These are documents little known at present; they will engage us in the second volume.

The following is the pretended secret treaty,

Article I. Russia shall take possession of European Turkey, and o shall extend her conquests into Asia as far as she may deem proper. 2nd. The Bourbon dynasty in Spain, and the house of Braganza in Portugal shall cease to reign. Princes of the Buonaparte family shall succeed to both crowns. 3rd. The temporal supremacy of the Pope shall cease. Rome and her dependencies shall be reunited to the kingdom of Italy. 4th. Russia shall afford France the assistance of her navy to reconquer Gibraltar. 5th. France shall take possession of such cities in Africa as Tunis and Algiers, and at the general peace all the conquests made by France in Africa, shall be given as indemnities to the Kings of Sardinia and Sicily, 6th. Malta shall be held by France, and no peace be made with England till she surrenders that island. 7th. The French shall occupy Egypt. 8th. The navigation of the Mediterranean shall be confined exclusively to French, Russian, Spanish, and Italian vessels. 9th. Denmark shall have as an indemnity in the north of Europe, the Hanseatic towns, provided she surrender her squadron to France. 10th. Their majesties the Emperors of France and Russia shall draw up regulations by which no power shall navigate merchant-ships unless possessed of a certain number of vessels of war." Such a treaty is tantamount to a division of the world between the two emperors. No one will assert the possibility of its being carried out; but Alexander, from his mobility of character, often cherished chimeras, and who can tell whether Napoleon did not appear to enter into his views in order to make him a safe instrument of his own plans? At all events, if the articles be not forged, they were never more than projected. It was under pretext of carrying out the continental system, and in consequence of the stipulations of the treaty of Tilsit, that Alexander the following year invaded Finland, and wrested it from his brother-in-law and former ally. He required this possession, the better to cover his capital on the side of Sweden.

(Note 12.) Page 72.

THE HOLY ALLIANCE AND MADAME KRUDENER.

The Holy Alliance, a treaty of a peculiar nature, has given rise to a variety of comments. The reader will be curious to learn how Alexander himself explained its origin, in a conversation on this subject in 1818 with Doctor Egbert, a Prussian evangelical bishop. We translate from the German.

"In the days of Lutzen, Dresden and Bautzen," said the emperor, "after so many useless efforts, when in spite of the heroism of our soldiers we were obliged to retreat; we,—that is, your king and myself—were unable to lay aside the conviction that the power of man could do little, and that Germany was lost, without the assistance and especial blessing of Providence. Your king and myself rode together unattended, serious, and a prey to reflection, without exchanging a word. At length the dearest of friends broke silence and said, 'Things cannot go on so! we are in the direction of the east, and it is towards the east that we must, that we ought, to march. We shall arrive there, God willing. And if, as I trust, he should bless our united efforts, we will proclaim in the face of heaven our conviction that to him alone belongs the honour.' We promised, and exchanged a pressure of hands upon it with sincerity. Then came the victories of Kulm, of Hotzbach, Grossbieren and Leipsic; and when we arrived in Paris, we had reached the end of our painful course. The King of Prussia reminded me of the holy resolution of which he had entertained the first idea, and Francis I., who shared our views, our opinions, and tendencies, entered willingly into the association."

"The idea of the holy alliance originated in the hour of misfortune; it was realized in the propitious hour of gratitude and happiness. The Redeemer inspired every thought comprised in the alliance—all the principles it announces. It is not our work, it is God's. Whoever does not recognize and feel this, whoever mixing sacred with profane things, views it but as a mask for hidden thoughts, and secret political designs, has no voice in this discussion."—Charakterzüge, und historische Fragmente aus dem leben Friederichi Wilhelmi III., (vol. ii. p. 246-48.)

Such are the words spoken by Alexander. The reader may compare them with the following passage of a work of M. Capefigue, "*Historie de la Restoration*," page 300.

"Alexander, a man of generous character, although somewhat of a dissembler, had at that time one engrossing idea, to secure peace to the world. His ambition was to offer a noble contrast with

Napoleon, who was great in war. Although the influence of Madame Krudener did not commence till 1815, the czar had already imbibed (1814) certain mystical ideas of predestination, which made him believe that his mission on earth was to fill the *rôle* of pacificator, by means of his immense armies. His was one of those souls, such as are to be met with in Russia, touched by pietism, and worn out by emotion. One might have fancied that, ever occupied with the thought of the cruel misfortune of his life which weighed him down with sorrow, he embraced the good with enthusiasm, as tending to counterbalance it." Since Madame Krudener is mentioned in this passage, a name which at that time was encircled with a halo of sanctity most surprising, but which has been by no means preserved in the family, we will say something of this remarkable woman, who has acquired a European celebrity.

Barbara Juliana de Vietinghoff, born at Riga, on the 11th (23rd) of October, 1764, belonged to a family of consideraton among the Lithuanian nobility. Her Father was a Russian privy-councillor and senator; her mother, born countess of Munnich, was grand-daughter of the celebrated field marshal. She was educated for society, and was partly brought up in Paris, whither her father conducted her when nine years old. She was married before she attained her eighteenth year, to Baron Krudener, a diplomatist of ability and learning, who after being successively minister of Russia in Venice, Copenhagen, and Berlin, died in the latter city, on the 14th of June, 1802.

The marriage was far from being a happy one. Spoilt from her early years, by the homage of the world, which was captivated by the graces of her person, and by the vivacity of her mind, and possessing an unbridled imagination, she committed faults, which compelled her husband to send her back to her family, though she had borne him two children, a girl and a boy.

From that time Baroness Krudener led a wandering life; she excited attention in Paris by a romance called "Valerie," which she published in 1803. Her lively conversation procured her the favour of Queen Louise, at Berlin; at Geneva, whither she repaired in 1812, she began seriously to think of religion. Before that period she had from time to time listened to its voice, had a very decided tendency to mysticism, and during her stay in Prussia had formed a connection with the Moravian brethren, with whom she entertained much sympathy. But she had long been occupied with the allurements and pleasures of the world, and it was only as years crept on that she heeded the warnings of religion, and felt daily a greater want of its support. In 1813 she saw at Carlsruhe, Jung Stilling, the celebrated mystic visionary, who completed her conversion. From that time she thought she had a call

to preach the gospel to the poor. At Heidleberg she undertook the mission of visiting prisons, and of conveying the word of God to prisoners condemned to death.

It was at Heilbronn, not far from Heidelburg, that the Baroness Krudener had her first interview with Alexander IV., June, 1815. A letter which she had written to Mademoiselle Stourda, inspired the monarch with the wish to see her. Eloquent and sentimental, she gained ascendency over his wandering imagination and fickle mind; her power over him became great as M. Empeytaz informs us,—a young priest of Geneva who joined her about this period, and became her zealous fellow-labourer. We shall soon see that the burning of Moscow had left a deep impression on the mind of the autocrat, and from that moment religion, that sweet comforter of man, found access to his heart.

According to the zealot of Geneva, he had lived up to that moment in sin, a result of the principles he had imbibed in the womb. "He became a religious man," says M. Empeytaz, "and one day told Madame Krudener, 'In my conferences with my ministers, who are far from having my principles, when we disagree, I pray inwardly, and see them by degrees come round to my principles of charity and justice.'"

Alexander entered Paris for the second time on the 11th of July, 1815. Madame Krudener followed him thither, held religious meetings, and owed undoubtedly to the distinguished protection of the emperor, the vogue which she enjoyed for some time, and which made her meetings the rendezvous of a select society, but which did not survive the absence of the monarch, upon whom all eyes were fixed.

He willingly yielded to the sympathy which attracted him towards a women of sensibility formerly given up to sin, but now a zealous apostle in the faith of Christ. "Some days before his departure from Paris," says the priest of Geneva, "he told us, 'I am about to quit France, but I wish before my departure to render a public act of thanksgiving to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for all we owe him for the protection he has accorded us, and to invite the people to act in obedience to the Gospel. I bring you a draft of the act, and wish you to examine it attentively, and if there be any expression you disapprove of, be pleased to let me know it. I wish the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia to join me in this act of adoration, that the people may see us, like the wise men of the East, acknowledging the superior authority of God the Saviour. Join yourselves to me to beg of God to dispose my allies to sign it.'"

Next morning Alexander called for his deed, and heard most humbly the remarks submitted to him: the following day he took it to the allied sovereigns to sign, and had the satisfaction of seeing

them adopt his views. In the evening he came to inform us what he had done, and to return thanks to God for his success."

This account has been published since Alexander's death; perhaps the words attributed to the emperor were written from memory, so that one must not scan them to the letter; but the fact so solemnly affirmed by a minister of the gospel, does not appear to us to admit of doubt; and nothing here stated contradicts the assertion personally used by the emperor, and quoted in the preceding pages. The idea of the Holy Alliance was not suggested by Madame Krudener, but this remarkable woman had evidently some share in drawing up the act, destined to put the idea in practice. We will briefly follow her to the close of her career.

Some time after the signing of the act, and the departure of the allied sovereigns from Paris, Madame Krudener, who had just described "Le Champ des Vertus," and the magnificent *fête* at which she had assisted on the plains of Chalon, finding she had ceased to attract attention, likewise quitted France.

She arrived at Basle at the close of 1815, and continued to preside over religious assemblies, occupying her time in attending the poor, the first of her duties. She became so followed, and her doctrines produced such sensation, that a minister felt compelled to denounce her from the pulpit, and the magistrates desired her to change her residence.

The same thing occurred at Baden* as well as in many of the Swiss cantons, till at length no government would tolerate her presence. The police of one country handed her over to that of another; at last she decided to return to Russia, and reached the frontiers without ever having escaped *surveillance* for one instant. Even in Russia she found little favour. All her followers, numbering about twenty persons, were sent about their business, but the baroness having written the emperor a letter of complaint, the authorities were ordered to allow her to retain them. She tried to continue her preaching at Metau, but unsuccessfully; she met with no countenance at St. Petersburg, and the enthusiasm with which she pleaded the cause of the Greeks, displeased the emperor, at that time under Austrian influence. She retired to her estate of Kosse near Werro, in Livonia, and led there an obscure life devoted to religion.

In June 1824, she accepted an invitation from her friend, the Princess Galitsin, to accompany her to her estates in the Crimea, and set out accompanied by her daughter, and son-in-law, the State Counsellor de Berkheim, but she had scarcely reached that

* Her justification is contained in a letter "de Madame la Baronne Krudener à M. de Bergheim, Ministre de l'Interieur à Carlsruhe.

distant country, when she fell sick and died, 12th December, the same year, at Karaçoubasar, a city of 10,000 souls, the most populous of the Peninsula.

" Her mind," says the Duke of Richelieu, " was the dupe of her heart." This criticism is very like eulogy. Madame Krudener had in reality a warm heart, ardent sensibility, and a vivid imagination; her reason though cultivated, and rather superior, had little part in guiding her conduct. Though a mark for criticism, she presents some luminous points, which will cause the memory of the zealous missionary to be respected. Her eloquence, which was captivating, was based upon sincere conviction; and if, abandoning her part of woman on the stage of private life, she appeared as a tribune in public, it was no doubt, as has been remarked, " because we cannot resist the longing to impart to others what we have deeply felt ourselves." She felt drawn onward by the " Spirit," and in these days of apathy, where miserable calculations predominate, we will not urge it as a crime that she yielded to a different impulse, that of enthusiasm carried to excess.

(Note 13.) Page 87.

CHARACTER AND PRIVATE LIFE OF ALEXANDER.

We have already recounted many opinions pronounced upon the most amiable of Russian monarchs, among others that of Napoleon. " He is a Greek of the Lower Empire."

The reader would wish to have at full length the opinion of the prisoner of St. Helena, as found in the memorial of Count Las Cases (1st edition, page 363). After having said of Frederick William III., " The King of Prussia in his private capacity is a worthy, upright, and honourable man, but compelled to yield to necessity; that man is his master who has strength and superiority on his side," the prisoner of Longwood continues—" As to the Emperor of Russia, he is infinitely superior: he possesses abilities, grace, and information; he is fascinating; but one cannot trust him; he is not sincere; he is a true Greek of the Lower Empire; he is, or pretends to be, a metaphysician; his faults are those of his education, or of his preceptor. What discussions have I not had with him? He maintained that hereditary right was an abuse, and I had to expend all my eloquence and logic during a full hour, to prove that hereditary right maintains the repose and happiness of nations. Perhaps he wished to mystify me, for he is cunning,

false, and skilful; he may effect much. If I die here, he will be my successor in Europe. I alone could have stopped the deluge of his Tartars. The danger is great and permanent for the continent, more especially for Constantinople; he coveted it much, and would have cajoled me on the subject, but I always turned a deaf ear.* That empire, impaired as it is, formed the point of separation, it was the marsh which prevented my flank from being turned. As to Greece, that is another affair." Elsewhere (vol. iv.) Napoleon says: "Alexander, singularly graceful, found himself on an equality with all that was most refined in the saloons of Paris."

He contrasted him with Frederick III. "He (Frederick) was always awkward and unhappy; the Prussians were mortified at seeing it." Napoleon, being constantly between the two sovereigns, the king who could with difficulty keep up, was constantly stumbling and running up against him. He redeemed these faults, however, by solid and estimable qualities. Alexander knew him, and did him justice.

Frederick William possessed a well-regulated and solid mind; he was gifted with sound sense, was the slave of his word, true to his principles, constant in his friendship, moderate in prosperity, submissive in adversity, highly religious and devoted to ritual observances; but he was an enlightened man, and a sworn foe to all mummery. M. Eylart attributes to him the most admirable sentiments, and traits that do him the highest honour. "I would not wish to reign over an irreligious people," was his remark at the commencement of his reign, 2nd January, 1798. A few weeks before, writing to Kæckeritz, he said, "Let every man act after his convictions, and be guided by reason and justice, and all will be speedily arranged." These maxims he kept in view through life; they presided over his actions, and constantly directed his conduct. In summing up his character, M. Eylart cannot discover one unworthy trait. His disposition was, to give, to assist, to make happy. In a memorial written by himself, he thus expresses his sentiments concerning religion:—"As regards myself, I could not dispense with Christianity; I should be miserable if I did not possess it. Where should we look for peace, security, elevation of mind, dignity, consolation, hope, if not to Christianity? What supreme felicity would it be, could I see all my subjects happy? but without virtue man cannot really be so, and can never become thoroughly good, but by the mild regenerating influence of religion." (Charakterzüge, v. i.)

We now arrive at the details of the private life of Alexander, mentioned in the passage to which this note refers. They are taken from a work published in 1829, under the title of "L'Her-

* These remarks throw doubt on the authenticity of the secret treaty of Tilsit, given by us previously.

mite en Russie," by M. Dupré de Saint-Maure, a work superficial and frivolous in appearance, but full of excellent information, derived from the best sources, on the very spot. The author of the "Mémoires d'une Maître d'Armes," whose immense information and inexhaustible genius we are forced to admire, will not contradict us, when we affirm that in it are to be found anecdotes of high interest, related with as much humour as taste. He says :—"The sort of life which the emperor has adopted for some years, is so opposed to that of the earlier part of his reign, as to bespeak real melancholy of heart. Having scarcely reached his mid-career, in the prime of manhood, he leads a solitary and miserable existence. He rises at six throughout the year, attends to business till eight, and then takes a walk, and returns to breakfast. At twelve, he mounts a caléche, attended by a servant, and proceeds to Pavolofski,* to see the empress-mother, and the princesses. He dines with the empress on his return, walks for some time, retires, and is seen no more. He devotes to business, or to contemplation, those hours which a sovereign usually so willingly passes in agreeable conversation in the company of his select associates. Such is his life in the country.

"When he inhabits the winter palace, with the exception of some slight changes, it is the same. I see him every morning at nine o'clock, repair punctually to the parade, near the palace, to see the guard mounting. This duty, which he has imposed on himself, seems to afford him pleasure, though it is very monotonous. At twelve, he gets into a caléche, or sledge, drawn by only one horse; he often goes on foot, and always unattended, to the grand duchesses; about two, he returns home, dines, and finishes the day as at Tsarsko-Sélo. I have seen him at the public theatre but once; the theatrical performances at the Hermitage are given up; he goes (but it is seldom), to a few private houses, to converse at his ease. Once this formed one of his chief pleasures.

"His simplicity, which he carries almost to an exaggerated degree, denotes his aversion to the ceremonies of court; we may say, that in this respect, he wishes to be the emperor as little as possible. On grand reviews, he shews himself in public, surrounded by a large *cortége* of aides-de-camp; but excepting on these rare parades, goes always alone and without escort. He assists on occasions of great solemnity only, when the traditions of power demand his presence. In fine, it may be said of him, 'he is the man of the court, who goes the most seldom there.'

"Although he speaks and writes several languages fluently, he has no taste for the literature of any country, not even his own. With the exception of M. Karamzin, who in his quality of historiographer, has sometimes an interview with him, he has never

* A delightful country seat near Tsarsko-Sélo.

been known to converse with any literary man. We have never heard any allusion made to his love of letters, and he has not, like his predecessor, a literary correspondent at Paris.

"The corps diplomatique so much in vogue, and so *fêted* by Catherine, never sees his majesty except upon particular levee days, three or four times a year. In the most inclement weather the emperor escapes from the city in order to spend three or four days at Tsarsko-Sélo; he is accompanied only by the aide-de-camp on duty, who seldom sees his sovereign but when he crosses his apartments to walk in the gardens.

"In fine, seated upon one of the most exalted thrones, Alexander leads the life of an anchorite; this would make one suppose he is a perfect master of business. Thus, whenever a minister is sent for, he cannot participate in the pleasures of his master, who literally enjoys none. He takes much interest in some details of business, and I know from excellent authority, that the foreign department is his favourite one; he constantly occupies himself with it, and is interested and amused by it. The military colonies occupy a great portion of his time; he scrupulously attends to the details of their affairs, and frequently visits these creations of his, to which he devotes large sums." 2nd vol. page 224, &c., &c.

"His repeated absences, the pleasure he finds in ladies' society, upon which subject we find such naïve confessions in the "Mémoires Historiques" of Madame Choiseul-Gouffier, his interest in the occurrences of the world at large, can have left him but little time for regular business in the cabinet with his ministers.

If we may believe the calculations made by an idler, Alexander did not go over less that 200,000 versts of country, and his distant journeyings were so much the more frequent, that the departures, arrival, and halts, were all arranged beforehand."

In this respect the emperor was punctuality itself; but in the meanwhile, business far more important than reviews at three or four hundred leagues from the capital, remained in abeyance. We have said in the text, that petitions accumulated on the table of the monarch; but although the fact of the prodigious number of memorials addressed to him is beyond dispute, it will be necessary to modify the expression of M. Dupré de Saint-Maure, if, when talking of the great order that prevailed about the sovereign, he is well informed. "All the tables," says this author, "and the desks upon which he writes, are admirably neat; he cannot endure the least disorder; the slightest particle of dust, or the smallest piece of paper unconnected with his work, he clears, and returns to its place every article he uses.

"On every desk is a folded cambric handkerchief, and ten pens just cut: the pens are mended instantly, although they had only served for a single signature. The supplying pens is done by con-

tract; the pen-purveyor receives 3000 roubles a year." This excessive order in little things is a characteristic trait, that should on no account be passed over, in spite of its apparent insignificance. The writer from whom we have taken it enlarges much on the change effected in Alexander since the period of the great political agitations. It formed a new epoch in his life, though according to the words of the monarch, which we shall read further on, it dated from the burning of Moscow.

"With some men," says the author of *L'Hermite*, "nothing contrasts more than their youth and mature age: Alexander's youth was remarkable for the simplicity of its tastes. During the early years of his reign he felt the want of repose from the grandeur and ceremonials of society. He shewed great fondness for the French theatre, which he extended to the performers: he treated them with condescension, which they abused sometimes by familiarity of manners, which would have offended a monarch less amiable and indulgent than himself. Now-a-days he neither speaks to comedians nor sees them on the stage. A total revolution has been effected in his habits and tastes. The life of Alexander would afford matter most interesting for psycological study, though perhaps the time for making it has not yet arrived. . . We must wait for the publication of the works of many cotemporaries, who came into contact with him: the memoirs of General Langeron are spoken of; from the writings of Thiers we conclude that Prince Czartoryiski has likewise composed a work; others high in office may have done the same, and in a few years great light will be shed upon a subject which we consider one of the most beautiful an historian, anxious to leave the beaten path and carry the eyes of the reader beyond the habitual horizon, could select.

"Russia, if better known, could afford materials for pictures of novel and striking effect; for there is to be found in a high degree *variety in unity;* there the manners have a stamp of originality, which is indicated by the very costume; there, as in the East, local colouring lends to fact a new and charming interest."

But the painter destined to enrich his pallet with them has not yet appeared: our ambition is by anticipation to render the task more easy.

(Note 14.) Page 73.

RELIGIOUS TENDENCIES OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER.

We have already conveyed to the reader some idea of the nature of these tendencies in the note relating to the Holy Alliance: if

we return to them now, it is to add other explanations gathered from Alexander himself, and which go very far in enabling us to estimate his character.

Education had made him what is generally called a philosopher. "The Empress Catherine," he said one day (1818) to Bishop Eylart, "was a woman of prudence and mind; she was a great woman; and her name will live for ever in Russian history.

"But with respect to that part of education which developes the piety of the heart, the court of St. Petersburg was pretty much what all others were at that time: there was abundance of words, but little sense; much exterior practice, but the essence of Christianity was absent.

"I felt the void in my heart, accompanied by a strange presentiment; I went, I came, I sought diversions: the burning of Moscow at last illumined my spirit, and the judgement of God on the frozen field of battle, filled me with a warmth of faith I had never felt before. From that moment I learnt to know God, such as he is revealed in the Bible; from that moment I tried to comprehend, as I now do comprehend, his wish and his law. The resolution to devote to God alone my glory, my person, and my reign, has been matured and strengthened with me. From that time I became another man, and to the deliverance of Europe from ruin do I owe my own safety and deliverance. It is only since Christianity has become the important object of my life, since faith in my Redeemer has manifested in me its strength, that the peace of God—and I thank God for it—has entered my soul; though it was not at once I arrived at this point: believe me, the road that led me to it was beset with many dangers, many doubts."—Charakterzüge aus dem leben Kœnigí Friderechí Wilhelms.

Alexander's piety was sincere and, in spite of the strangeness of many scenes drawn by the methodist minister Empeytaz, it was enlightened and comprehensive.

Alexander was an orthodox Christian, not in the sense of his church, but in the rigorous conformity of his creed with the fundamental dogmas of all Christian churches; which is the redemption of mankind, in the saving death of Christ, through faith.

He prayed with equal fervour in a Catholic or in a Protestant church, as at the foot of the altars of the Græco-Russian Church. He loved to read the Bible; and Bishop Eylart has gathered from his lips on the subject, words full of truth, sense, and religious liberalism.

"Of what use is the Holy Alliance," said he to the reverend bishop at an audience, "if the principles of which it is the exponent remain isolated in the midst of the people, and do not penetrate their hearts?

"This could only be done completely and with sincerity by

means of the Bible as it exists: we possess it in every idiom; it is to be found among all people. Of all translations that of the great Luther, they say, is the best, and surpasses others in clearness, warmth, cordiality, and precision. We should circulate these holy books as they have come down to us. Commentaries have the fault of substituting for the text the ideas of the commentators, which are not received by all the world. Let it be the business of every Christian, to whatever creed he may belong, to suffer the Holy Bible to act freely upon him according to his capacity: the action must needs be beneficial and stimulating, as proceeding from a divine book, the Book of books. Its effect upon each will be different, but it will make of each individual all that could be made of him according to his peculiar nature. Unity in variety—is not that the great point to arrive at to cause churches and nations to prosper?

"That principle of unity in variety we see everywhere in external nature, and likewise in the history of nations; only we must not think to measure it by the short space of our own lives: it is to ages and decades of ages we must look when we wish to judge the result of a great struggle between forces opposed and hostile to each other.

"On contradictions, falsehoods, vain commotions, all the offspring of party spirit, time does justice,—it throws them off like an impure froth which evaporates. Truth endures. But truth is slow in its action: it requires sometimes ages before it is fully admitted; nevertheless it penetrates; it is impossible to seal it hermetically, as some would wish to do with the Bible. Do not the sun's rays pierce? Those who live in its light are the children of light." (See the German.)

(Note 15.) . Page 102.

ELIZABETH'S PHYSICIAN.

We must give a short notice of Doctor Stoffregen, who was in attendance upon the empress until her death, and who died some years after. He was privy councillor, and superior officer of the order of St. Vladimir (2nd class). During the temporary absence of this, her principal physician, Elizabeth called in the excellent Dr. Müller, and Dr. Trinius, the celebrated botanist and member of the Scientific Academy of Petersburg. Dr. Müller, who was a most experienced practitioner, immediately perceived the nature of the disease, and prescribed sharp remedies. But the empress, either unwilling to believe herself so seriously affected, or considering

life as not worth the sacrifice of all her accustomed habits, and the constraint which such a regimen imposed upon her, allowed herself to be persuaded that the doctor was endeavouring to magnify his own importance, and make himself necessary to her. When, therefore, he returned to Rammenoi-Ostrof, the empress, said briefly but graciously, "I am not unwell, and I hope you are not uneasy on my account." Who knows but the treatment suggested might have produced more salutary effects than the journey to Taganrog, which was afterwards recommended? But the decree had gone forth: man, in his blindness, can but grope his way; Providence sees all, and goes directly to the end.

(Note 16.) Page 103.

TAGANROG, THE IMPERIAL RESIDENCE.

The formerly important city of Taganrog, situated on the left shore of the sea of Azof, has long enjoyed the reputation of a delightful climate. In a letter from Catherine II. to Voltaire, dated March 14th, 1771, (letter 72,) we find the following remarks. "I would say that the climate of Taganrog is, beyond comparison, finer and more healthy than that of Astrakhan. All who visit it say, they cannot sufficiently praise this spot, in relation to which, like the old woman in *Candide*, I will tell you an anecdote. After the capture of Azof, Peter the Great, wishing to have a port on the sea of the same name,* fixed on Taganrog. He hesitated for some time after its foundation as to whether he should build the city of St. Petersburg on the Baltic or raise one at Taganrog. Circumstances finally decided for the former; but no advantage was derived with respect to climate: at Taganrog, there is scarcely any winter, while ours is exceedingly long."

The philosopher of Ferney replied, (May 6th, 1771, letter 76,) "Madam, I shall have myself taken in a litter to Taganrog, since the climate is so genial; but I think the atmosphere of your court would be much more favourable to me. I shall not, however, have the pleasure of dying either as a Greek or a Roman. Your Imperial Majesty allows every one to take his departure for the other world according to his own fancy. A billet *de confession* will, probably, not be suggested to me."

We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of also transcribing the

* Peter had not, at this time, any port on the Black Sea, his territories not having yet reached it on any side.

reply of the royal correspondent, although Taganrog forms but a small part of its contents. All these letters are so witty that we like to quote them, even at the risk of wandering a little from our subject.

"Monsieur," writes Catherine, "if you get yourself carried to Taganrog, as your letter of the 6th mentions, you cannot avoid coming by St. Petersburg. I cannot say whether the atmosphere of my court would agree with you, or whether eight months of winter would restore you to health. Certainly, if you like lying in bed, the cold will supply you with a sufficient excuse; but you will be in no difficulty to find one; and I will venture to say there are few places where there would be less. With regard to the billets *de confession*, we do not even know the name; and should look upon it as a mortal weariness to make mention of those oft-repeated disputes, upon which, in other countries, silence has by edict been imposed. Every one here is free to hold what faith he pleases.* If you would but come to Nipchon, all the Chinese with any pretensions to good taste, would soon leave his majesty of China and his bad verses † to repair to you; and they would only be doing their duty in rendering homage to the first scholar of their age."

But let us leave the Celestial Empire, the gilded verses of the Son of Heaven, and even the billets *de confession*, to return to the climate of Taganrog. Upon this subject the Empress Catherine was in error, as the winter of 1825-6 has sufficiently proved. Clarke, who a few years ago spent some time there, does not give at all so favourable an account of it in this respect; on the contrary, he says, "This city exhibits the two extremes of heat and cold. During summer, the most excessive heat prevails, and in winter the cold is equally intense; but in spring and autumn, seasons which in this place are particularly short, the temperature is moderate and agreeable." (Voyage en Russia, en Tartare, et en Turquie, t. iii. p. 254.) In another place (t. ii. p. 106), he gives some further particulars. "Often," he says, "the most violent storms of wind prevail, and continue for several weeks. Taganrog is frequently visited by gales from the east, but very seldom by a wind directly from the north, and scarcely ever by one from the south. The cause of this latter fact is said to be the obstruction presented by the Caucasian mountains, to the winds blowing from that quarter." Farther on, Clarke speaks of the port, "if, indeed, it deserves the name," and of the want of deep water, "which," he says, "obliges vessels performing quarantine, to lie to

* There is some little difference in this respect at the present day.

† See, as to the Emperor of China and his subjects, some delightful things in Letter 70th, (Jan. 23, 1771,) and the following. All are amusing and well-written, and better still, instructive.

at a distance of fifteen versts, and prevents such as draw from eight to ten feet of water approaching any nearer in order to land their cargo." Continuing the description, he says, "Taganrog is situated on the declivity of a point of land, which commands a view over a considerable part of the sea of Azof, and all the European side, as far as the mouth of the Don. Even Azof may be discovered in clear weather, from the heights of the citadel. At present the number of inhabitants does not exceed 5,000. The water used there, as well as that of the Don, is very unwholesome when the wind brings in any from the sea; but it becomes less so when the current flows outwards. The idea of founding his capital in a place so unfavourably situated, can certainly not be reckoned among Peter the Great's most happy projects. The water there, is in fact so shallow, that it would have been impossible to form a harbour without the assistance of canals, the digging of which would have involved incalculable expense." ..... "The inhabitants of Taganrog flatter themselves that the emperor will sometimes visit their city, and that it will then become of more importance. Indeed, but for the want of water, no other position in the centre of Russia could be more favourable for commerce.

"Taganrog formerly contained 60,000 inhahitants, but some time after the capitulation made by Peter the Great with the Turks, (capitulation of Prouth, 1771,) the city was completely destroyed."

This fact is attested by contemporary authors. "By this treaty," says Perry, "the czar promised to restore the city of Azof to the same state in which it was when captured by the Turks, and to destroy Taganrog, a powerful fortress, built by the czar, on the Palus Méotide, where he had also constructed magazines for the supply of his fleet, and the new port of which, I have spoken." ("Histoire de Moscovie," p. 61, also p. 15.) But as to the 60,000 inhabitants, this appears to us rather a doubtful matter, and we would not wish to be responsible for it.

The true etymology of Taganrog is Taganrok, which appears to refute the pretended fact, of the former inhabitants having been so numerous. Peter the Great found there only a small number of old decayed houses, called in the Tartar language Taïgone, that is to say, a stove or oven, which the Russians call Tagani. Peter ordered a fort to be built on the promontory, (in Russian rögh, a word which signifies a horn,) and called it the Fort of the Holy Trinity, on the Cape of Tagani, (tchto na Taganiem roghon,) a rather long name, which, fortunately, has been abridged into Taganrog.

The house in which the Emperor Alexander died, and which then belonged to a Russian merchant, has since been purchased by

the crown. It remains in its former state, and a little chapel has been erected near it. A statue of the emperor, in bronze, on a pedestal of granite, now adorns the city; it is immediately opposite the beautiful Grecian convent of Varvaki, where the body of the deceased emperor was first deposited.

We are just now reminded of a circumstance connected with Taganrog, which may be considered worth knowing. It refers to the residence of Alexander in that city, and we feel it our duty to correct the error of a writer of some authority, Dr. Eylert, a Protestant Bishop, who was senior chaplain to Frederic William III., King of Prussia. The memory of this worthy ecclesiastic was of but little service to him, in all that he relates respecting the emperor's residence there, and as to the motives which induced him to prefer that place. We are obliged to dispute his testimony, because we must be faithful to history; for, although nothing can be more correct than the commencement of the following passage, the remaining part is far otherwise. "Alexander I.," says the reverend bishop, "was a prince animated with the love of his fellow-men, and who held an ideal Christianity, which he would fain have made practical. His noble heart, glowing with love, cherished the most benevolent projects. He was well aware of the difficulties against which he would have to contend; but he does not appear to have had the courage to meet them. On the contrary, he endeavoured to conceal them from himself." So far, all is correct; but the author adds, "He left St. Petersburg, and, *giving way to his melancholy inclination*, repaired to the centre of Russia: first to the Crimea, and afterwards to the tranquil city of Taganrog, then containing about 17,000 inhabitants.* . . . . *Here he established himself:* he took up his residence in the spot which appeared to afford him so much enjoyment, *and it was from this inconsiderable place that he governed his immense empire.* There, in the peaceable environs of the city, he shewed himself in his true character, and gave free vent to the noble feelings which embraced the whole of mankind, whose happiness he had at heart. There is reason to believe that, some time after, he actually meditated the relinquishment of power, in order to rest tranquilly at Taganrog, during the remainder of his life. However that may be, he certainly prolonged his stay there for an entire year, far removed from the magnificence and the bustle of his capital. The gentle and retiring character of his excellent wife, the friend of our ever-beloved Queen Louisa, led her also to prefer a life of tranquillity. Accustomed from her childhood to the romantic scenery of Carlsruhe, and the peaceful Bruchsal, she still cherished the remembrance of the happy days she had passed there with her

* In 1842 they amounted to 22,472, including those of its immediate environs, the village of Troitza, &c.

excellent mother and amiable sisters, and the less a life in her high sphere at St. Petersburg, with its etiquette and constraint was congenial to her, the more she enjoyed her hours of retirement, and the places where such were to be found. The long and severe winter at St. Petersburg had injured her, and she awaited the return of health, and the enjoyment of a milder sky. *With the consent of her husband, the emperor, she repaired with a small number of attendants to her peaceful and pleasant residence at Taganrog, &c.* (Charakterzüge, &c., t. ii. 2nd part, p. 287—296.)

This passage contains an error which seems astonishing on the part of a cotemporary, and still more so on that of a man living at a friendly court, and constantly in the presence of the King of Prussia, who was so closely connected with Alexander. The emperor went to Taganrog not so much on his own account as on that of his wife; not for the purpose of retiring from the world, but that he might not be separated from the noble princess, from whom he afterwards bitterly reproached himself for having been absent so long. And the voyage to the Crimea was to him one of fatiguing business rather than of repose. Every remark relating to this sojourn of the emperor on the banks of the Sea of Azof, partakes more or less of error. He was not there *an entire year*, but only for a few weeks; and a great part of that time was lost to him by the disease of which he afterwards died. Such errors are to be deplored in a work otherwise so interesting, so curious, and instructive.

(Note 17.) Page 108.

THE TOMB OF SOPHIA N——,

Is not far from Strelna, in the cemetery belonging to the convent of the Trinity, dedicated to St. Sergius. This cemetery contains the vaults of several noble families, particularly that of the Zouboffs, so celebrated during the reigns of Catherine II. and Paul I. A beautiful monument to the memory of the Princess Galitsin is also to be seen there.

The convent, which is of the second class, and takes its name from the desert or solitude, (Joustynia,) is situated on the highway to Riga and the Gulf of Finland.

We have already mentioned the Castle of Strelna, about eighteen versts from St. Petersburg, and near Peterhoff, the Versailles of Russia. Paul presented it in 1797 to his son Constantine, who occasionally resided there during the summer,

selecting an apartment in the upper story, on account, it is to be supposed, of the beautiful view which it commanded over the Gulf, Cronstadt, and the capital in the distance.

(Note 18.) Page 163.

STATE OF CRIME IN ST. PETERSBURG.

During the November of 1825 nothing was heard in the capital but reports of the immense number of crimes committed there under cover of the night, and perhaps in consequence of the carelessness of the officers during the emperor's absence. Our diary is full of particulars on this subject. "Ever since my arrival here,"* I perceive I have set down, "my ears have been shocked by the most dreadful reports. Sometimes I am told of some well-known person being nearly murdered about nightfall at the corner of a street; sometimes of a corpse having been found without its head, and which the murderers had totally despoiled of clothes: yesterday it was of a peaceable citizen, who had been stripped of every garment, and merely escaped with his life: to-day, there is an account of a house in one of the most frequented parts having been broken into and robbed: even the very temples of God do not escape the attacks of these marauders, who appear to have settled as in a swarm on this ill-fated city. The inhabitants tremble in their houses, and do not dare to quit them after dark, however urgent their business may be."

Many of these evils are laid to the charge of the carelessness of General Choulghin, who was recently appointed chief of the police, a situation which he formerly held in Moscow. The vigilance of this man's subordinates is very insufficient; and the town being badly lighted, renders their efforts still less effectual. The Governor-general, Miloradovitch, is also wanting in the necessary exertions, not allowing his soldiers out of barracks during the night.

The police were much more efficient under General Ivân Gorgoli, a man of great personal activity, and in whom all placed the utmost confidence. He resigned after three years' service, on account of a dispute with Count Miloradovitch. When a report of his retirement was mentioned one evening at a party in the capital, Alexander Naryschkin, who was fond of a jest, exclaimed, taking up his hat, "Bless me! if Gorgoli retires, I also will retire every evening at nightfall, and barricade my house." General Gorgoli was married to a daughter of the celebrated General Ribas.

* Oct. 30, 1825: the court had been absent for several months.

(Note 19.) Page 224.

COUNT ALEXIS ORLOFF.

Our intention was to have given here a short account of this favourite of Nicholas; but the order of events, and the part taken by his brother in the conspiracy, oblige us to defer our attention to this *family*, so long celebrated in the annals of Russia. We shall therefore make a separate note on the family of Orloff, which will be found No. 2 of the Studies, Notes, and Explanations, vol. II.

(Note 20.) Page 234.

CRITICAL REMARKS UPON SOME WORKS RELATING TO RUSSIA.

M. de Custine, in the second volume of his work, "Russia in 1839," gives an account of a conversation which, he says, took place between him and the Emperor Nicholas. Being already prepossessed in his favour from his writings, and by all he knew of his high descent and loyal opinions, Nicholas at first gave him a flattering reception. The same favour, however, was not extended to him during the whole of his visit, though it at the time gave occasion to many curious conversations. M. de Custine gives the following words, among others, as proceeding from the monarch's own lips:—

"I have done nothing extraordinary. I said to the soldiers, 'Return to the ranks!' and when passing the regiment in review I cried, 'On your knees!' All obeyed. What rendered me so strong was, that the moment before I had resigned myself to death."

Ocular evidence of what took place, such as is given in the following note, entitles us to assure the reader, that of these words,—if they were so uttered,—the former only could relate to the revolt of 1825. M. de Custine appears to have confounded two different periods. The command "On your knees!" was given and obeyed with the most miraculous submission, not at the time of Nicholas' accession, but seven years later;—first, on occasion of the commotion excited by the cholera; and again, during the rebellion of the military colonies in 1832—an event which, though but little known, evinced in the highest degree the presence of mind, courage, and energy of Nicholas.

It may be well to remark here, that the merit of M. de Custine's work is not so much that of precision in his accounts, as in the style in which he has arranged them, in the acuteness of his observations, and in a degree almost of divination, which enabled him instinctively, as it were, to comprehend character; in the clearness, the energy, and the boldness of his thoughts, which seem as if engraven for future ages, notwithstanding a certain intemperance of language which sometimes destroys their force.

This brilliant writer has more than once done us the honour of quoting from one of our former works on the empire of the czars. We have amply repaid the compliment, and no doubt with better reason, but have confined our quotations to thoughts, opinions, &c. As to his statements of facts, the number of those who differ from him* is so considerable, that we must believe they have some ground for their opinions; but in the manner of presenting them they compete with him in vain.

We shall pass over in silence the work of M. Ancelot, "Six Mois en Russie," rather hastily written at the time of the events related; neither shall we refer to the errors into which M. Lesur, generally so excellent an authority, has fallen in his "Annuaire," 1825. But we must say a few words on the subject of the Russian conspiracy, as described by an anonymous English writer in the "Revelations of Russia," a work which has been translated into several languages.

The author, evidently a sensible well-informed man, and who appears well acquainted with Russia, points out the extreme importance of the events. "The facts on which we are about to enter," says he, "are but imperfectly known in Europe, though the subject once possessed all the interest of the finest and most striking drama. It was nothing less than the conspiracy of an entire class in a nation of 60,000,000 of inhabitants, without the means of civilization, against tyranny the most corrupt and corrupting, and which every day the more enchained and degraded them."

If the narrative which follows is not equal to this promising introduction, it is no doubt on account of the author's not having himself been a witness of the events. We do not consider it to be so, because, independently of several errors in the detail, he relates the whole of M. de Custine's conversation with the emperor, of which we will presently speak: he repeats it, not for the purpose of refuting it, but in order to complete it, as a true recital, for it is, in fact, very incomplete.† We are the more confirmed in our opi-

* MM. Latenski, Gretsch, &c.

† The English writer is, however, very well aware how far we may trust to the authenticity of the accounts in the work "La Russie en 1839." "The Marquis de Custine," says he, "represents these events as furnishing an occasion to Nicholas of distinguishing himself before

nion by the following lines on the conduct of the Emperor Nicholas:—"In the face of his whole army, this man, who in his admiration of everything martial had not for many years laid aside his uniform, who in stature and bearing was like another Cœur de Lion,—this man, the moment his troops were engaged, retired to a distance from the scene of action, in order to secure his own safety, thus shewing an instance of moral firmness united to physical timidity, a union not impossible, though so rarely found. Both his friends and his enemies may respectively draw from this day's conduct a proof of his weakness and his courage." That this accusation has but little foundation, we have the testimony of all the population of St. Petersburg, and all the travellers who were there to witness the scene of action. Certainly the young emperor was not in the heat of the battle, exposed to the fire of the cannon and the assaults of the rebels; but would that have been his proper post? or would he have been suffered to remain there?

The extract from our journal, contained in the following note, gives an exact transcript of our own impressions on this subject, and we have reason to think we are right. In the present work we speak freely on everything, without disturbing ourselves about the displeasure which we cannot help giving to some, in order to be quite free from the charge of flattery. With regard to the courage of the young monarch, there is but one opinion in St. Petersburg; and the terms in which La Ferronays, then French ambassador in Russia, spoke of him, "This is Peter the Great civilized!" still further confirms this opinion.

On the whole, the work entitled "Revelations," &c., notwithstanding the solid information which forms its basis, partakes but of the character of a pamphlet, and maintains the cause of the anti-Russian party. Hence, far from dwelling on its want of exactness, we must, on the contrary, feel surprise at the great number of truths which it contains. Perhaps we may ourselves borrow some particulars from this work, suitable for the completion of our own recital. For instance, the author says positively, that Major-General Benkendorff had confidently reckoned on the assistance of the artillery at the very moment when the conspirators arrived and carried them to the *plain** of St. Isaac. If we have given few extracts of this kind, it is because we are ignorant on what authority the relation depends, and from what source they are taken.

the eyes of Europe for his firmness and courage." He probably knew little of the history of the insurrection, and still less of the particulars of the previous conspiracies. He dwells but little on this point, and seems to take for granted all he has collected in the immediate atmosphere of the court.

* Here, and in several other places, instead of the *plain* of St. Isaac,

In order to represent the character of Alexander, the writer wittily, though rather irreverently, quotes the following fable of the poet Kryloff,* "probably the first writer of fables in any age or country."

"The sheep came one day to complain to the elephant, their king, of the ravages which the wolves made among them. 'What is this I hear?' said the elephant to the wolves. 'How did you dare to attack my subjects the sheep?'—'Sire,' replied the wolves, 'we only ask one single fleece of each of them, and they have refused to give us even that.'—'Well,' returned the elephant, 'you may take one fleece from each; but take good care you do them no further injury.'"

In this little critical review we ought perhaps to mention the "Mémoires d'un Maître d'Armes," compiled by M. Alexandre Dumas and M. Grisier, the celebrated professor of fencing, whom we had the privilege of meeting at Moscow in 1826. We beg it to be understood, however, that this meeting was of strictly a pacific nature. The notes supplied by him to our great novelist must be of some value, for there is in this interesting composition as much of truth as it would be reasonable to expect in a romance. But who is the hero? Is it Ivacheff? or Bassarghin? for both received from a French girl the evidence of a generous devotion. The betrothed of the former was a young girl who had been companion to his mother; she was well educated and of the most unexceptionable manners. The other, also a French girl, who joined her lover in Siberia, was of inferior rank, but possessed the same superiority of mind.

We shall see farther on that the wives of several of the criminals did not wait for others to shew them an example of conjugal duty; but how many were there who acted otherwise! how many noble Russian ladies might have blushed for their selfishness, when they heard of the resolution of these two humble strangers!

we certainly ought to read *place*. Mistakes of the press are numerous in the French translation, and several names are entirely changed; for instance, instead of Chtchépin-Rostofski, we read Stephen R., &c.

* He was mentioned before, p. 202. No Frenchman would confirm the opinion which the English writer expresses of Kryloff at the expense of La Fontaine.

(Note 21.) Page 243.

THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS IN PRESENCE OF THE REBELS.

We will now give the promised extract from our journal, and we oppose it with confidence to the opinion expressed in the "Révélations," as quoted in the preceding note, p. 419.

"During two hours, an unusual noise, and shouts which I took for the necessary accompaniment of a review, announced to me the accession of the new emperor, and drew me to the place of the Admiralty, whence the sounds proceeded. It was crowded. An uneasiness, however, soon seized upon me; the sullen look of the soldiers, the anxious countenances of the officers, the disorder which reigned among a group of generals at the head of whom I recognized the young sovereign, pale, and almost distracted; above all, the perpetual cries that issued from behind the statue of Peter the Great, that is to say, from a place whence the emperor was absent, all shewed me there was something going on very different from a parade. From another part, when I had gained the boulevard of the Admiralty, opposite to the Garokhovaïa, (*Rue des Pois,*) and looked round on the people who pressed upon me on every side, breaking down the railing which was intended to protect the footways, when I looked at the bearded moujiks, on the crowd of individuals of every class, all watchful, inquiring, but amusing themselves as if at an exhibition, laughing as if it were all a matter of amusement, my fears appeared to have been ridiculous, and I did not know what to think. I set myself as well as I could (for I was only beginning to speak Russian) to inquire of my neighbours on the right hand and the left, when I saw the emperor, sword in hand, urging his horse forward in our direction. Displeased at the presence of so many idle spectators, he advanced to the footway, and several times requested the crowd to retire. "Do me the favour," said he, "to return home. You have nothing to do here." They retired a few steps, and then, impelled by curiosity, returned. I did the same, and near me some old women remained, in equally flagrant disobedience, repeating, "He comes to ask us himself! and how politely too!"

The horse-guards and chevalier-guards passed slowly before us, sliding, as it were, on the snow, which prevented the tramp of the horses drowning the cries which were still resounding. These two regiments wear the same uniform, white with a red collar, and the head-piece alike. They are distinguished only by the black leather cuirass, which is worn over the coat of the former. The emperor frequently changed his position, sometimes mixing

among the generals of his suite, sometimes passing rapidly before them in evident agitation. Grief was depicted on every feature, and the expression of his countenance was serious in the extreme. Nevertheless he sought danger, rather than avoided it.*

Notwithstanding my usual hardihood in such cases, I was far from feeling secure, and waiting only for the cavalry to pass, I rushed across to where a crowd of inquirers were standing before the Princess De Labanoff's house. Several shots at this moment being discharged, threw all into consternation; and the confusion which followed was still further increased by the appearance of several bodies of soldiers who approached from every direction, dragging pieces of cannon along with them. I made my escape along with the rest, for now all bore the aspect of an actual conflict. Fear seized upon all; the people fled distractedly to their homes, and shut themselves up for safety. I had not reached my abode on the Quay la Moïka, when a suspicious flash appearing in the distance, near the *Pont Blue*, gave intimation that firing was about to commence: several cannon shots followed almost immediately. The gaiety of the moujiks had no doubt by this time disappeared."

Note (22.) Page 247.

GENERAL MILORADOVITCH.

This warrior, so distinguished for his extraordinary valour, and who, as Count Phillipe de Ségur informs us, was surnamed *the Russian Murat*, was born at St. Petersburg in 1770 or 1771. He cannot be considered a Servian, as M. Thiers would have it;† but his family, notwithstanding their settlement in Little Russia since the time of Peter the Great, originally came from thence.

It is said that one of his ancestors, a rich and influential man, raised a force of 20,000 men, and joined the czar in his war against the Turks. In return for this service, Peter presented him with a considerable tract of land in the Ukraine. Several members of his family afterwards filled distinguished places in the administration.

Michael Andreïovitch, the subject of our present sketch, entered the army at a very early age, in the regiment of Izmaloff, one of the most distinguished in the service. He first served in

* See also p. 517.

† "Histoire du Consulat de l'Empire," t. vi. p. 232.

Turkey (1789), then in the war against the Poles (1792). During the campaign of Suwarrow in Italy, he became Colonel of Apchérou's regiment. Being in the advanced guard, he had a good opportunity of distinguishing himself, and soon attracted the attention of the warrior whom the Russians looked upon as the first captain of the age. Miloradovitch was by him made a general on the field of battle, and gave new proofs of intrepidity at the passage of the Adda, during the affair of Lecco, April 27th, 1799, where he had three horses killed under him. It was Miloradovitch who commanded the rear-guard at the passage of the Pont du Diable.

At the battle of Austerlitz he was almost the only Russian general who obtained any advantage over the French troops. M. Thiers makes the following mention of him in allusion to this affair :—"General Miloradovitch was a Servian, of the most astonishing bravery, but utterly ignorant of all military science, untutored in his manners, and uniting in his character every vice both of savage and civilized life." The historian here remarks, that the character of the Russian soldier generally corresponds to that of his officer. "They had," he says, "the wild and undisciplined bravery of savages. Their artillery was heavy, and their cavalry but indifferent. Altogether, the generals, officers, and soldiers composed an ignorant army, but one which was singularly formidable from its ardour and devotion. The Russian troops have since learned the art of war by practising against us, and have begun to add learning to courage."

While at Amstetten, November 5th, some weeks before the great day of the three emperors, being, with the brave Prince Bagrathion, in command of 6000 men of the rear-guard, Miloradovitch saw himself surrounded by the troops of Murat and Lannes, and had to sustain a conflict against forces infinitely superior to him in number. The Russians performed prodigies of valour, and opened for themselves a passage through our troops, who bear testimony to the noble courage they displayed. The rank of lieutenant-general and the grand cross of St. George (2nd class) were conferred on Miloradovitch as the reward of this exploit.

But the triumph was short: Miloradovitch had his share, as well as all the Russian army, in the defeat of Austerlitz. Some short time after the war against the Turks was declared, Miloradovitch was entrusted with the command of a division, and again distinguishing himself, received from the Emperor Alexander a sword, bearing the inscription, *To the Saviour of Bucharest;* he was also promoted to the rank of general (in chief) of the infantry. After the death of Field-Marshal Prince Prosorofski, (1819,) he was appointed to the temporary command of the

army, but resigned it in about two months to Prince Bagrathion, who had stronger claims to the distinction. Again, in 1810 and 1811, he commanded a body quartered in White Russia, and was appointed military governor of Mohiloff.

The following year Napoleon's celebrated invasion of Russia took place. Miloradovitch was unanimously elected, by the nobility in power at Moscow, to the command of the militia there raised by government. In fulfilling his duties in this appointment, he became one of the leaders at the battle of Moskva, (September 7th, 1812,) and three days afterwards he was placed at the head of the rear-guard. Finding himself unable to preserve Moscow, he threatened the King of Naples (Murat) that he would set the city on fire if he did not allow him time to effect a retreat, and thus succeeded in obtaining the required delay.

When the Russians recommenced hostilities, Miloradovitch was appointed to the advance-guard, where he remained until the close of the campaign, distinguishing himself on every opportunity. First, October 4th, at Vinkovo, not far from Malo-Jaroslavetz, in the government of Kalouga, where, but for the tardiness of Koutousoff, Prince Eugene and Davoust would have been annihilated by the Russians; then at Krasnoïé, a little on this side of Viazma, as you approach Bérésina; at Varsovi, &c. On the 11th October he had a remarkable interview with Murat, which has been mentioned by historians, but which did not produce any result. He has often been compared to Murat. "He was," says M. de Ségur,* "an indefatigable, an impetuous, and a valuable warrior, like this soldier-king, and of a stature equally remarkable. He was never wounded, although crowds of men and officers have fallen round him, and several horses were killed under him."

During this invasion our army was nearly destroyed, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather and Napoleon's want of forethought; but in Germany it was replaced by another. Miloradovitch had no part in the battle of Lutzen; but the allied army having made a retrograde movement after their defeat, he happened to pass their rear-guard, and was beaten, May 12th, by Charpentier's division. He was not more fortunate at Bautzen; but had his revenge at Kulm, where, with Generals Kleist and Collorado, he assisted in the destruction of Vandamme. At the battle of Leipsic he commanded, under the Grand Duke Constantine, the Russian and Prussian reserves; and was presented with the badge of St. Andrew, and shortly after invested with the title of count.

During the campaign in France Miloradovitch again displayed the most wonderful activity. He took a distinguished part in the battles of Brienne, Arcis-sur-Aube, Fère Champenoise, and Paris,

* "Histoire de Napoléon et de la Grande Armée," t. ii. p. 172.

and in the camp of the enemy was reckoned among the bravest of men; indeed, nothing could equal his courage and contempt of danger.

On his return to Russia he was made governor-general, first of Kief, and afterwards, in 1819, of St. Petersburg. But weak and undecided in office, as he was bold and resolute in the field, wanting information and method, not precise in his statements, and inclined to rashness in conduct, he possessed none of the qualifications necessary for an able minister. M. de Ségur gives the same description of him: "He was," says he, "a general only on the field of battle, without abilities for governing of any kind, either in private or public; a known spendthrift; and—what is seldom seen—honest and at the same time extravagant."

We have seen in this work the manner of his death, a lamentable end for a warrior who had with impunity braved danger on so many fields of battle, who had served his country with such devotion, and who, moreover, by his frankness, his honesty, and kindness of heart, had won the love of all. We are told that being on one occasion exasperated by the desertion of a large number of his soldiers, he expressed himself with such intemperance as to provoke a blow from one of his countrymen; but we may well pardon a momentary burst of indignation from so devoted a soldier, irritated by the sight of his army in revolt, and discipline—that first duty of a soldier—outraged and trodden under foot.

Koutousoff, an eye-witness of the exploits of Miloradovitch, praises him in the following words:—"My chief of the advance-guard is a true Bayard, a brave chevalier, without fear and without reproach."

Count Miloradovitch was never married, but he left a sister, Marie Alexéiovna, the widow of an officer, of whom the emperor, when visiting the general on his death-bed, promised to take care. He granted her a pension of 10,000 roubles, and also paid all the general's debts, and made the most magnificent preparations for his funeral: he attended it himself, as did his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, together with all the garrison of St. Petersburg.

The whole city participated in the grief of his family, and every one wished to take a last farewell of their hero. He was laid on a state-bed, surrounded by priests, who night and day repeated over him the prayers for the dead. The ornaments of nearly twenty orders were placed upon as many cushions round his bed. After lying in state for several days for the gratification of the people, the body of the general was removed to the cathedral of Notre Dame at Kasan, where it remained until the day fixed on for the funeral, January 2nd, 1826 (December 21st, 1825). The

cold was excessive, the thermometer standing at 9° Reaumur,* and the soldiers had been under arms for some hours, when the brilliant procession, followed by the emperor himself on horseback, set out for Saint Alexandre Nevski.

Lieutenant-General Golénitcheff-Koutousoff was appointed to succeed Count Miloradovitch in the command at Petersburg.

(Note 23.) Page 256.

V. KÜCHELBECKER AND THE ACADEMY OF TSARSKO-SÉLO.

In the opinion of Alexander Bestoujeff, V. Küchelbecker was a man of a bold and ardent imagination. He published, under the title of "Chekspirovei Doukhi" ("The Spirits of Shakspeare"), a dramatic farce, in two acts, (St. Petersburg, 1825,) which attracted some attention. Some time before, as has been already mentioned, he took advantage of his stay in Paris, to bring out there a series of Russian literature, under the auspices of Benjamin Constant; but the language of the Russian professor was so violent as to determine the government to withdraw their patronage.

Küchelbecker, as well as Pouschkin, the liberal poet, and several other distinguished men, had been educated at the academy of Tsarsko-sélo, an establishment which received peculiar marks of favour from the Emperor Alexander, particularly after the closing of the Jesuit colleges in St. Petersburg, in the beginning of the year 1816. The order for the expulsion of the Jesuits from the country, a few years after, was the occasion of much ill-will towards the rival establishment.† The "Universal Gazette of Lyons," the organ of this too well-known society, took occasion, from the transactions of 1826, to say that several of the rebels had proceeded from the academy, while none among them had belonged to any school of the Jesuits. It also insinuated that the deplorable events which followed upon the death of Alexander would never have taken place if the youth of St. Petersburg and Moscow had been allowed to remain under Jesuit authority.

However, the former principal of the academy, M. Engelhardt, councillor of state, (actual,) treated these invidious attacks in the manner they deserved. We have seen his memoir in which,

* About 16° 12′ Fahrenheit.

† The definitive expulsion of the Jesuits from the whole empire took place, April 6th, 1820. In 1816 the order reckoned in Russia 674 members. In 1801 the number had not reached more than 264.

without mentioning the Jesuits, who were already fallen to a depth out of which in Russia nothing could raise them, he enumerates more than sixty of his former pupils who attained to services in the state, doing honour to the house where they had been brought up, and to the masters who had directed their studies. That with regard to the two, Küchelbecker and Pouschtkin,* though they had mistaken their duty, they were the only exceptions to the rule, and as exceptions proved nothing contrary to it. "It is true," adds M. Engelhardt, "that Küchelbecker was once among the professors of the academy, but he did not remain there, and left it several years since."

With regard to the Jesuits, we repeat that they were driven from Russia, first under Peter the Great, who in his manifesto declared that he had seen, even in other countries, "what sort of influence they exerted."

(Note 24.) Page 269.

THE FAMILY OF THE PRINCES GALITSIN.

The reader has seen, in the quotation from Strahlenberg, in what degree of estimation this family was held at the time of the debates relating to the vacancy of the throne in 1613. Fully impressed with the importance of the subject—for they were in fact one of the most numerous and influential houses in Russia—we have devoted much time and attention to researches upon it, and trust that they will not be without their use, even though they do not present an interest equal to their novelty. These new studies, however, have extended the sphere of our notice to a degree incompatible with the limits we have prescribed to ourselves in this work; we shall therefore place it among the notes and explanations, vol. II.

(Note 25.) Page 270.

THE TCHINN AND THE TCHINOVINKS.

The Russian word *tchinn* or *tchinne* signifies ceremony, ceremonial, order, rank. In Russia you may happen to be invited

* Who is not to be confounded with Pouschtchin: we shall speak of him at the close of our history.

beg tchinof, that is to say, without ceremony; but in general they preserve the *tchinn*, or order of rank. They are accustomed to see every thing take place *tchinna*, according to the rule or ceremonial; and there is the *tchinn tscrkovnii*, church ceremonial, as well as that for civil and military affairs.

The *tchinn*, strictly speaking, is the order of rank introduced by Peter I., (Jan. 24th, 1722, old style,) with the desire of giving all classes of his subjects an interest in the new state of things he wished to bring about, and to inspire a salutary emulation among men capable of rising by their own merit, as well as among those who owed their position in life to the accident of their birth only. In other words, it is the classification of military ranks and civil offices on one common standard, in which the grades that admit of personal or hereditary rank being conferred are pointed out. Peter the Great, wishing to secure the fidelity and attachment of his auxiliaries, who were chiefly strangers, and whose services he urgently required, declared that all honours in the state should be the reward of services rendered to him; that merit should take precedence of birth, and that the highest rank should be that in which both were united. He appointed sixteen degrees of military rank, with a corresponding scale for the civil service. These sixteen classes have since been reduced to fourteen, and the denominations slightly changed; but in every other respect the institution has remained the same as when it was established by the czar-reformer.

The following table will shew the corresponding ranks in the civil and military services. It commences with the highest rank. We observe some blanks, for, in fact, there are some degrees which can belong but to one of the two services; and we also observe one of these grades without any particular name besides that of class, by which we specify it accordingly.

Military Service.	Civil Service.
1. Field-Marshal . .	Privy-Councillor (actual),* 1st class.
2. General-in-chief† .	Privy-Councillor (actual).
3. Lieutenant-General .	Privy-Councillor.
4. Major-General . .	Councillor of State (actual).
5. ————‡ . .	Councillor of State.
6. Colonel . . .	Councillor of the College.
7. Lieutenant-Colonel .	Councillor of the court.
8. Major . . .	Assessor of the College.
9. Captain of the Staff .	Titular Councillor.

* Throughout this scale the word *actual* is not to be understood literally; it merely distinguishes titles, not real or actual functions.

† Or of the body-guard, general of the infantry, cavalry, artillery, or engineers.

‡ Formerly the rank of brigadier.

Military Service.	Civil Service.
10. Captain. . .	Secretary of the College.
11. Lieutenant . .	———————.
12. Sub-Lieutenant .	Secretary of the Government Class.
13. Ensign Sword-bearer .	———————.
14. Ensign . .	Register of the College.

In the army, personal nobility may be conferred on officers of the highest rank, and those above the rank of major may receive an hereditary title. In the civil service, until the year 1845, personal nobility was conferred on entering the 10th class, and hereditary nobility on arriving at the 8th, which corresponds with the military rank of major; but this has since been changed, as will presently appear. To each class was attached a particular distinction (one is *blagorodnii*, well-born) from the moment of receiving the rank of personal nobility. When arrived at the 5th class, you are addressed *vaché vyçokorodié* ("your high birth"). In the 4th, "your excellence;" and above that, "your high excellence," *vyçokoprevoskhoditchstvo*.

The ukase of June 23rd, 1845, occasioned new arrangements in the civil department. Thenceforth hereditary nobility has in great measure depended on the will of the sovereign, and the title of "honourable commoner" (*patchotnii grajedanine*)* been frequently substituted for the rank of personal nobility. This distinction was introduced by the imperial manifesto of April 10th, 1832, and conferred various hereditary privileges, as exemptions from the poll-tax and conscription.

We as cordially commend the changes prescribed by the ukase of the 23rd June, as we formerly disapproved of the real disadvantages which the *tchinn* had produced in the civil department, and which we have more than once pointed out; always, however, doing justice to the grand idea of Peter the Great, of placing talent and merit on a rank with birth. "Does not this arrangement," we said in 1829,† "puff up beyond measure the body of the nobility? does it not injure this perhaps necessary institution? and, by depriving the *tiers-état* of all its distinguished citizens, does it not lessen the estimation in which it is just and desirable to hold the labouring classes? does it not irretrievably raise above industry and the arts qualified men, who might have contributed to their success, if they had not been given another part to act?" &c. "Does it not injure the body of our citizens," we repeated in 1844,‡ "by depriving them of all that makes

* We write according to pronunciation; but the true orthography is *potchetnii*, distinguished, honourable.

† "Statistique Générale de l'Empire de Russie," p. 244.

‡ "Encyclopédie des Gens du Monde," art. Russie, t. xx. p. 696.

their glory and their strength? does it not increase the arrogant class of the *tchinovinks*, who pretend to so much above their just claims, and who so often become a tax on the poorer order of the people?"

Here we may perhaps be asked, "Who are these *tchinovinks?*" they are the subordinate class of officials of the *tchinn;* they are the Russian bureaucracy, against whom so many just complaints arise, and who press so heavily on the poorer classes. These men, the greater part of whom, ignorant and proud though they be, and owing their advancement only to their birth, are the most strenuous upholders of the present order of things. Friendly to the abuses by which they live, habituated to violence, mercenary to a proverb, they have but little taste for improvement, and treat everything foreign, whether men, ideas, or customs, with a degree of arrogance of which M. de Custine has given an illustration, where he introduces his reader to the family circle of the engineer of Schlussburg. He makes the following remarks on the same subject:*—"Had not an aristocracy whose influence had for years been acknowledged in the country any better means of effecting its improvement than an exercise of the hypocritical obedience exacted by a body of commissioners? And," he adds, "from the privacy of their chambers, these invisible despots, these tyrannical pygmies, oppress the country with impunity, for their dominion reaches even to the emperor himself, who is well aware he does not possess the power attributed to him; and who, in the terror he would willingly conceal from himself, knows not at all times what limit may be placed to his authority. He feels it, and suffers it without daring even to complain.†" This limit which is the bureaucratic ascendency, a fearful power at all times, from its liability to abuse under the name of the love of order, is more to be dreaded in Russia than in any other country. When we see administrative tyranny substituted for imperial despotism, we tremble for the fate of a country in which the system of government propagated by the French nation throughout Europe, has, without any counterbalacing influence, been established.

We have pointed out the disadvantages of the *tchinn*, and they are serious; but it is not so easy, perhaps, to find the remedy. In a certain sense, the whole administrative system of Russia is founded on the *tchinn*. It indemnifies officials for the insufficiency of their emoluments, while it subjects these to a certain rule of increase, in proportion to the years of service; it stimulates the self-love of all, gives an impetus to the energies and the

* "La Russie en 1839," t. iv. p. 75.

† There is here, as in the whole work of M. de Custine, much exaggeration: the principle on which he writes must alone be our guide.

will, and forms a close tie between the state and its members. In default of a more worthy object of ambition, it is a powerful lever, for the degree of *tchinovink* is an object of desire to every man, and the advancement from one class to another is in itself the grand occupation of life. The thirst for exterior distinction is universal. "There is no system," says a Sclavonian writer, "so favourable to the promotion of personal ambition and self-love. The constant expectation of obtaining a rank, an order, a distinction of some sort, and the thirst for such things, so far from being appeased by success, is, on the contrary, increased by it, and becomes the ruling principle of life. Nevertheless, this system, incompatible with any individual advancement, renders man a mere instrument, a very automaton, which moves only at the will of the government.

As a political stimulant, the *tchinn* is certainly of considerable value; but looked upon in a moral point of view, it gives occasion for criticism, and is the cause of much of the cruel thraldom in which the country is held.

(Note 26.) Page 271.

THE GERMANS IN RUSSIA

Are not so remarkable for their numbers as for their high state of civilization. There are not fewer than 460,000, reckoning the nobility of the Baltic provinces, Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland, and the townspeople of the same parts and of St. Petersburg, where the Germans are particularly numerous. We should be wrong to reckon as *German provinces* the governments bordering on the Baltic, and which were formerly subject to the Teutonic order, or to Denmark and Sweden. The mass of the people are composed, one part of Finns and the other of Lettonians, neither of whom have anything in common with the Germanic race. The line of separation between these people divides Livonia into two parts, and extends to the environs of Dorpat.

We can therefore say but little of the German nation with relation to Russia, and shall merely take occasion to introduce a passage from a work, "De la Russie et de la France," (p. 190,) which occurs to us at this moment. "Russia," says the anonymous writer of this work, "contains within her a nation of Germans, who in all respects possess an unquestionable superiority, and it is from them she draws the most distinguished of her statesmen, her politicians, and her warriors. And why is it

that these are, comparatively speaking, so superior to her Russian subjects? Precisely because, as men, they were born Germans; that is to say, their morality and their intelligence have been cultivated, have been developed in the more genial soil of a richer, a more elevated, and enlightened civilization, of an agency more impressive and penetrating, and of which the influence as of a second nature forms the rule and the measure of their existence. We do not merely speak here of individuals—it is the general character of the nation at large that we describe."

(Note 27.) Page 278.

LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP AUGUSTIN.*

After the birth of his eldest son at Moscow, in 1818, the Grand Duke Nicholas addressed the following remarkable letter to Augustin, the head of the diocese there:—

"MOST REVEREND PRELATE,†

"I have seen, with the agitation of a weak mortal, but with the faith of a confirmed Christian, the most decisive moment of my life approach. Ignorant of what Providence had determined for me, I fortified my soul by a religious vow, and waited the will of God with resignation. It has pleased Divine Providence that I should enjoy the happiness of being a father, and he has also been pleased to preserve the life both of mother and son. The expressions of gratitude, which are not necessary to Him who sees the hearts of all, are yet but the natural outpourings of one deeply penetrated by it. The vow, which I am now eager to fulfil, is to erect a chapel dedicated to Alexander Nevski,‡ in the church of the New Jerusalem.§ It will be but the humble offering of a happy father, who confides to the Almighty care his most precious treasure, the destiny of his wife and child.

* The archbishop died March 15, 1819. See an account of him in Bantysch-Ramenski, (edit. Chirageff,) "Biographical Dictionary of Celebrated Men," &c., vol. i. p. 1. Also, for a notice of the illustrious metropolitan Eugène, of whom mention has been made, those of our readers who understand the Russian language may refer to the Dictionary of M. Snégireff, vol. i. p. 13, &c.

† In Russian, *préosvischtchennéïchii vladyko.* The word *vladyko*, or *vladyka*, literally means lord, master; it is the usual title of Russian bishops, as well as that of the prelate, who is at the same time temporal and spiritual chief of Montenagro.

‡ Who presides over the newly-born.

§ A convent near Moscow.

"Your eminence must be my help and guide in the accomplishment of a vow so dear to my heart. May the most fervent prayers for both mother and child be addressed to heaven at the foot of an altar erected by a father's gratitude! May the Almighty preserve their lives for happiness, for the service of their sovereign, and the honour and welfare of their country!

"While asking your blessing for them and for myself,

"I am, &c., (Signed) NICHOLAS."

(Note 28.) Page 279.

DESCRIPTION OF NICHOLAS BY PRINCE KOZLOFSKI.

This is the sketch mentioned in the text, where reference was made to this note. The best which in our opinion has been drawn of the reigning sovereign of Russia, is that by the talented Russian Prince Pierre Kozlofski, who also gives a sketch of the state of society in that country.

This personage has probably been already introduced to the greater number of our readers by M. de Custine's work, "La Russie en 1839," in which, from the commencement, he is, as it were, set before us, his thoughts and opinions forming, perhaps, the most remarkable part of the whole work. Prince Pierre Borrissovitch Kozlofski was born at Moscow in 1783, and became successively minister and envoy-plenipotentiary to the courts of Turin, Stuttgardt, and Carlsruhe, and chamberlain to the emperor, with the rank of councillor of state (actual). He was an incessant talker, but possessed of much ability in giving point to his discourse, and spoke the French language with facility. He was principally distinguished for his independence of character, never consenting to act the courtier to a power he could not esteem. Notwithstanding his feelings of nationality, he died in the Catholic faith. This event took place at Baden, October the 26th, 1840.

Having been once with the Grand-Duke Nicholas and his consort on the royal battlement, l'Œmhetan,* Prince Kozlofski noted down the impressions he then received of the future emperor; and a portion of his journal having been preserved for us by Dorow,† the late Prussian antiquary, we think our readers will be pleased by our presenting them with a copy of the extract relating to the Grand-Duke, which is, in fact, the sketch before alluded to.

"The grand-duke has received from Nature one of the finest

* A Swedish word signifying tenderness.

† Author of the little German work, "Fürst Kozlofsky," Leipsic, 1846, 12mo.

gifts that could be granted to an individual in his high rank, that of the most noble figure I ever saw. The general expression of his countenance has in it something of severity and misanthropy which does not set one quite at ease. His smile is one of courtesy, not the expression of gaiety or enjoyment; the constant repressing of which has become so habitual to him that there is no apparent effort or constraint, and every word and gesture is in perfect harmony with this expression. He speaks with animation and simplicity, his conversation is always easy and appropriate, and whatever he says is intellectual and in good taste. There is nothing in the tone of his voice or the character of his discourse which indicates pride or dissimulation, and yet you feel that his heart is closed, that the barrier is insurmountable, and that it would be vain to seek to penetrate his thoughts. He has even to a certain degree communicated the same characteristic to his wife, who often displays an expression of suspicion and scrutiny which ill accords with the pleasing regularity of her naturally sweet and gentle countenance. But I may be wrong: it may not be the example of the grand-duke which has taught his wife to distrust all mankind; it may be rather the influence of the Russian court, which has caused this air of reserve and distrust in both—that gloomy court, where, since the time of the Menchikoffs and the Ostermanns, all moral independance, all elevation of soul has been looked upon as something monstrous, and where interest and intrigue, like malignant serpents, discharge their venom into the ears of the sovereigns themselves. The grand-duke does not confine his attention to military affairs, but is said to be a first-rate engineer, and of course a good mathematician. He reads much, and I have been told possesses, in a supreme degree, that power of concentrated attention which, according to the definition of Montesquieu, is but another name for genius. . . . The grand-duke has hitherto borne the title of general only, but everything proves his high qualification for that of statesman also; and if in the course of his life he do not perform some great things, he will have been wanting in the object for which Nature designed him. I do not doubt but he will give his son a superior education, but I fear that in cultivating science he will neglect to encourage a taste for the "Belles Letters" and poetry. And yet the cultivation of this taste would be one of the greatest benefits that could be provided for future generations in Russia, for where the influences of the external world are so harsh and severe, all the softening influences of imagination are needed to counteract their effect upon the mind. If the grand-duke ascends the throne, I do not doubt but he will be served with zeal; not that he will win hearts like Henri Quatre, but because men like to obey a prince on whom they can look with pride, to whom they may justly apply the two celebrated

verses of Berenice, and who, under the seal of majesty, imprinted by Nature, possesses a superior intelligence which heightens and confirms the impression his appearance has already produced. It is, however, by our loves as well as by our hatreds, that our individual character is shewn. The grand-duke loves his consort, as he does everything, simply and nobly. The grand-duchess has a majestic air and figure, and pleasing and regular features. When animated, the unpleasing expression of her piercing glance disappears, and she is once more the daughter of the Queen of Prussia, and the sister of the Grand-Duchess of Mecklenburg. The princess becomes lost in the more angelic form of woman."

After this little sketch of the grand-duke and duchess, Prince Kozlofski gives a hasty glance at their suite, of whom the Princess Volkonski, and the Count de Modena, are the principal. "As well as I remember the former," says he briefly, "there is no more to be said of her than that she is a woman advanced in life." In this there is nothing very extraordinary. The Princess Alexandra Nikolaiovna, daughter of Field-Marshal Prince Repin, and wife of Prince Grégoire Volkonski, general of cavalry,* had been at the court for half a century, and lady of honour since 1807. Her age did not prevent the emperor requiring her appearance at the coronation balls in 1826, although one of her sons, Prince Sergius Grigoriëvitch, had just been condemned to hard labour in Siberia.† She was dignified with the order of St. Catherine (1st class), and died about the end of the year 1834, aged seventy-eight years.

As to the Count de Modena, Prince Kozlofski describes him as a sincere and agreeable man: "He is," says he, "a courtier engrafted on a man of talent." After the accession of Nicholas he was for some time chief master of the horse to his majesty.

The grand-duchess was also accompanied by the Princess Soltikoff (Saltikoff), "a distinguished and graceful woman, but cold." She was, no doubt, the Princess Catherine Vassiliëovna, born Princess Dolgorouki, who married Prince Sergius Saltikoff, senator, and member of the imperial council: he died in 1830. The widow was appointed lady of honour, in 1835, and mistress of the court (*Gossmeisterina*) to the Grand-Duchess Marie Alexandrovna, in 1840.

* He died in 1824.

† If we were inclined to relate all we know of the terror that prevailed in the house of Prince Peter (since then minister of the imperial court) at the time when the conspiracy was discovered, and when the news arrived that one of the conspirators was arrested, our readers would form some idea of what the autocratic government of Russia is, and of the position of an aristocracy which is sometimes represented to us as sullen and refractory.

(Note 29.) Page 291.

RUSSIAN FINANCE.

This subject, little understood, is very interesting; it is not our intention, however, to treat it at length in this place.

Perhaps we may enlarge upon it, some day, in our biographical notice of the late minister of Finance, Court Cancrin; for the moment, we shall confine ourselves to a few general details, drawn from the best sources, and which appear to us to be worthy the attention of the reader.

In every branch of material industry, the onward movement of Russia has been prodigious. The finances of the country are necessarily affected by it. In order to judge of the progress observable in this administration, we shall establish some points of comparison. We shall commence with Alexis Mikhaïlovitch, father of Peter the Great. "His revenue produced," says Strahlenberg, "but 5,000,000 roubles, or* 25,000,000 francs. Notwithstanding which, his court was one of the most magnificent in Europe. He maintained a numerous army, and left, at his death, considerable sums of money." At the close of the reign of Peter the Great, the revenues had doubled. According to Oustrialoff, it was, in 1725, 10,186,000 roubles, or nearly 60,000,000, at the present rate of exchange of the rouble, (in paper, or about as many francs.)

The pôll-tax produced about 4,290,000 roubles; the customs, more than 1,200,000; the tax on brandy, 980,000, the salt-tax, 662,000.

In 1770, under Catherine II., the revenue was rather more than 100,000,000; and at a later period of her reign, it reached 170,000,000.

In 1804, Storch asserts, "from most authentic sources,"† that the revenues approached 109,000,000 roubles—about 350,000,000 francs. Five years later, General Stedingk, Swedish minister at St. Petersburg, gives his court the following information. "They pretend, here, that the revenue of the state amounts (1806) to 168,000,000, that is, that it has trebled since I came to Russia. I believe that this statement is exaggerated by at least one-fifth." By the exchange of that day, 160,000,000 roubles would have made 380,000,000 francs.

The revenue to-day is not under 500,000,000.

* The value of the rouble, now four francs, has not always had the same value: the difference between the silver and paper rouble has always varied since 1768, the date of the creation of bank notes, till the ukase, 13th July, 1839.

† In the "Description Historique de l'Empire Russie."

We have said that, from 1826 to 1844, under the administration of Count Cancrin, the revenue had increased 160,000,000, an unheard-of augmentation to have been realized in the space of twenty years.

In order to shew whence arises the sum of 500,000,000 roubles, we will give some details. The most important branch of the revenue is the farming out of the manufactory of brandy. It produced, in 1844, 128,000,000 paper roubles, or about as many francs.

The customs occupy the next rank, and have constantly exceeded 100,000,000, since 1840.

The poll-tax, paid by the citizens and peasants, is about 80,000,000.

The obrok, or land-tax, paid by the crown peasants, produces 30,000,000 or 40,000,000.

The tax on guilds, or on the capital of merchants, produces from 20,000,000 to 25,000,000.

The post-office, in 1843, produced a net revenue of 4,175,963 silver roubles, equal to about 15,000,000 francs.

Patents, from 3,000,000 to 4,000,000.

The stamps, about as much more.

The gold, silver, and other mines of the crown, royalties, &c. produce at least from 15 to 20,000,000. M. de Reden quadruples this sum. We have here a total of 400,000,000, if we take the minimum of each article: to this must be added the appanages, the rents of the farms, the monopoly of tobacco, the duty on cards, the imposts on salt and crown manufactories, which will bring us to the sum of 500,000.000 specified.*

This sum is small, when we consider that the army absorbs 180 or 200,000,000, to which we must add about 50,000,000 for the navy, and 80 to 85,000,000 interest on the public debt and sinking fund.

But we must calculate various sources of revenue which do not figure in the budget; as far as they go, the observations made in 1829 exist in full force. According to Mr. Reden the appanages produce about 14,000,000. The imperial privy purse about 8,000,000 more. We believe the expenses of the household are not under 20,000,000. Such are the observations we have to make for the present on the budget of Russia: we will now say something of her public debt.

In round numbers, without counting the bank notes in circulation, it is 1,200,000,000 of francs, which is not an exorbitant sum. It results from loans mostly contracted with foreign

* In France the revenue is one thousand three hundred millions; in Great Britain about one thousand four hundred millions. See the general statistics of France, &c., vol. ii.

houses (such as Rothschild, Baring, Hope, and Co.) : no loan has been contracted at home since 1817, excepting the one with the house of Stieglitz and Co., in 1842, especially destined to defray the expense of constructing the rail-road from St. Petersburgh to Moscow.

The following are the details of the debt as prepared by the Minister of Finance the 9th July, 1846, for the annual session of the council of institution of the public credit :—

Foreign debt terminable,—

Roubles . .	38,915,590—Silver roubles	68,273,000 Dutch
Home debt .	50,388,680 silver roubles.	flors.
Permanent debt	226,408,230	
Total	315,712,500 silver roubles.	

At 4 francs, the silver rouble will make in round numbers, 1,260,000,000.

The bank notes (assignats) in circulation represent the value of 170,221,802 silver roubles, or 680,000,000 francs in round numbers. To this must be added 50,000,000 francs, or notes in reserve.

An ukase, 13th July, 1843, created a new paper money (*billets de credit*) destined to supersede the former by progressive purchases. The nominal value of the paper is expressed in silver roubles, according to legal course. The paper money (bank notes) are guaranteed by a fund deposited in the vaults of the fortress of St. Petersburgh, which amounted the 13th January, 1846, in coined silver and silver bars,

to the sum of	82,644,246 silver roubles.
Notes found at the same time in deposit	12,760,837
Add to this 9th July, 1846, notes exchanged for specie . . .	5,177,407
Total	100,582,490

The fund amounts consequently to about 400,000,000 of francs, that is to nearly three-fifths of the value of the notes.*

The reserve for liquidating the debt consisted of

37,561,500 silver roubles for the 6 per cent. loan, and for the first and second loans at 5 per cent.
138,800 the amount of the debt proceeding, from the third and fourth loans at 5 per cent.
227,600 for the loan at 4 per cent.
6,170,200 reserve.

44,098,100,

* It was from this fund that the 50,000,000 francs were drawn, in March 1847, to purchase that amount of stock for the Russian Govern-

which in round numbers make a total of 175,000,000 francs. The Russian financial system will repay the most curious researches; but we have stated that we are not yet prepared to follow them up.

We must remember that questions involving the highest interest respecting this matter have been raised by Mr. Charles Duveyrier, in a letter addressed to Mr. Mauguin. One may derive further information on the whole system, in that remarkable summary on political economy ("Die Œkonomie der menschlicken Gesellschaften," Stuttgart) which Count Crane, after retiring from public affairs through ill-health, composed in the year preceding his death, in order to divert his leisure,—too short, alas!—and to gratify an eager longing for active employment, which haunted him to the last.

(Note 30.) Page 296.

MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPEROR.

We shall give the list of the nominations made by Nicholas during the first days which followed his accession to the throne.

It will be observed that the high aristocracy is scarcely represented in this new batch, although there certainly figure a Chéremétieff, (a different branch from the counts,) a Golovin, and some other old members of ancient boïar families; but such names are rare, as are also the princes of the blood of Rurik, of whom, however, there exist a great number.

General aides-de-camp: Voinoff, and Soukhin, general-in-chief; Nicholas Demidoff* (subsequently senator, general of infantry, and director-general of the pages); Bachoutzki (since general of infantry) and Bistrom, lieutenant-generals; Siniavin, vice-admiral; Tchitchérin, Soukhozanet, Chinchin, Golovin, (since general of infantry, commander-in-chief of the army of the Caucasus, and afterwards governor-general of the Baltic provinces,) Neidhardt, Sazonoff, Martinoff, Voropanoff, Islénieff, Chipoff, Ouchakoff, Strikaloff, Potapoff, Baron Friedrichs, major-generals.

Aides-de-camp: Colonels, Semarki, Mikoulin, Prianischnikoff, Stegelmann, Albrecht, Stüler, Vesselofski, Devitte, Arbousoff,

ment, which the bank of France sought to get rid of, without throwing it suddenly on the market.

* We shall give on another occasion, a detailed notice of the Demidoff family, now connected with that of Buonaparte, by the marriage of Anatole Demidoff, author "Du Voyage dans la Russie Meriodionale," with a Princess de Montfort. This family, as is well known, possesses the richest mines in the Ural mountains, from which a considerable exportation of metals takes place.

Bergmann, Hartong, Baron Sarger, Moller, Nestérofski, Bell, Chérémétieff, Lanskoï, Zakhaïrefski, Baron Velho, De Sass, Kavelin,* Pérofski, Hodeine, Baron Dellingshausen, D'Adlerberg, Mærder,† Schembel, Slatvinskï, Koskull, Baron Arbshoven, Baron Freidrichs, Gerbel; captains, Prince Sergius Meschtcherski, Baron Salz, Lasareff, Count Ivélitch, Count de Lieven, the Prince of Italy.

(Note 31. Page 297.)

THE LIEVEN FAMILY.

In the "Encyclopédie des Gens du Monde," is to be found a detailed account written by us, devoted to this ancient Livonian and Courland family, upon which the kings of Sweden conferred the title of baron, since changed by Russia to count, then to prince.

We shall give a few hasty notices of this house. At the period we are describing, the venerable countess (later made a princess), Charlotte Karlovna of Lieven, lady in waiting, a member of the 1st class of the order of St. Catherine, who attained the age of eighty-seven, and died 7th March, 1828, was still living.

Wife of Major General Baron Lieven, she was forty years of age, when Catherine appointed her in November, 1783, to superintend the early education of the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael Paulovitch, and of the grand duchesses their sisters.

She spent consequently forty-five years at court, and was respected and beloved by the imperial family, was made in 1794 lady of the bed-chamber, and received, five years later, the title of countess, for which her old pupil Nicholas, after his elevation to the throne, at his coronation substituted that of princess.

It is asserted that during that long period, under four successive sovereigns, she did not make a single enemy, or lose a friend:

* Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Kavelin advanced most rapidly in his career. After having for some time, under the orders of Prince Lieven, directed the education of the young grand-duke, with the title of vospitatel, he became governor-general of St. Petersburg, general of infantry, and member of the council of the empire. He was unfortunately affected, subsequently, with mental derangement.

† Colonel (afterwards general) Mærder was at that time attached to the hereditary grand-duke; he had been, previously to the poet Joukoffski, director of his studies. It was to the last that the care of instructing the prince was entrusted as preceptor (nastavnek); among the masters were M. Lipmann for history, M. Collins for mathematics, M. Arsénieff for geography and statistics, M. Florent Giles for French.

a more beautiful eulogium could not be pronounced. The imperial family treated her with marked respect.

An eye-witness relates a scene which occurred at the latter end of December, 1825 :—.

" The empress was seated with her children; by her side were the grand duchesses Mary and Olga : the young grand duke was playing with a juvenile comrade, who had been chosen in order to stimulate his ambition, and attend him as a personal friend. The countess was announced. The young prince and princesses immediately rose, ran to the venerable lady, and kissed her hand, giving her marks of attention, which affected her to tears." This scene was worthy of the chamber of the children of Queen Louise, as described by Bishop Eylert; it reflects honour on the education the princes and princessess received from their august mother. The princess had three sons, two of whom, beloved by the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas, have filled high offices of trust during the reign of the latter. The elder, Charles Andréavitch, preceded Count Ouvaroff, as minister of public instruction. Born in 1770, he embraced the military profession, in which, in 1797, he attained the rank of major-general, and in 1827 the rank of general of infantry. From 1817 till the close of the reign of Alexander, he was curator of the University of Dorpat; he was accused of tendencies to mysticism, doubtless sincere, but little favourable to the development of science.

Nicholas attached him to his person. In 1826 Count Lieven was made member of the council of the empire, and formed one of the intimate associates of the monarch. The title conferred on his mother at the coronation made him a prince. He presided, as we have said, from 1818 to 1833, over the direction of public instruction, but appears to have subsequently retired from public life, and died on his estates in Courland, in 1845, at the age of seventy-eight. He left two sons, one of whom was Count (later made prince,) Andrew Karlovitch, whom we have earlier described as joining Count Adlerberg in the attempt to restore obedience to the regiment at Moscow, excited to rebellion by the conspirators. The second son of the former governess of Nicholas, Christopher Andréavitch, followed the career of arms, and subsequently attained high honours in diplomacy. He was made colonel and aide-de-camp by Paul in 1798, and became lieutenant-general at the treaty of Tilsit. From 1807 to 1812 he held the post of envoy extraordinary at Berlin.

The war which commenced with Russia having for a moment broken off the connexion existing between his sovereign and the King of Prussia, (although they always entertained a personal friendship for each other,) Count Lieven was ordered to the embassy in London. He held his post there till 1834, during which

time his name figured in the most important diplomatic transactions, such as the recognition of the independence of Greece, (in the treaty, July, 1827,) and the separation of Belgium from Holland in 1831. In this last transaction he had the assistance of a young Pole of great ability, Count Adam Matuszewicz,* who died a few years ago. He was promoted in 1819 to the rank of lieutenant-general; and received at the same time, in 1826, the ribbon of the order of St. Andrew and the title of prince. In 1834 he was made governor (*popétchitel*) to the hereditary Grand-Duke Alexander, whom he accompanied on his travels, and died at Rome, 10th January, 1839, leaving a widow and two sons, of whom we have previously spoken.

Daria or Dorothy Christophorovna was, as we have mentioned, sister to Count Benkendorff, and daughter of a general of the same name. She accompanied her husband to Berlin and London, and acquired during her long residence near the court of St. James's great knowledge of public affairs: the house of the embassy could boast of no more experienced diplomatist. She was appointed lady-in-waiting to the empress in 1828.

She has constantly inhabited Paris since the death of the prince; and we are assured that her intimacy with the most eminent ministers, her moderation, and affection to our country, have not failed to exercise a happy influence at the moment when official relations were all but broken off between the two empires, in consequence of certain personal dislikes, very unreasonable, and to which we shall allude at the end of our work on Russia. Prince Dolgoroukit writes, "The house of Lieven is now honoured in one of its members, Baron William de Lieven, a man as much distinguished for his merit as for his noble character." Aide-de-camp general to the emperor, he accompanied the young hereditary Grand-Duke Alexander in his travels through Germany. He afterwards fulfilled several missions to Persia and Constantinople, and his name has been alluded to in the public journals in connexion with his mission to Servia, where he rendered signal services. He has since, we are informed, given up the diplomatic profession. He does not, however, belong to the Livonian branch of the Lieven family, but to that of Courland, established at Autzburg, Okten, &c.

* Pronounced Matouchévitch. We do not change the Polish names, because they are too well known, and because the Polish alphabet is the same as ours; whilst the Russian is quite different, and we wish to write it as near the pronunciation as possible.

† "Notice sur les Principales Familles de la Russie."

(Note 32.) Page 297.

GENERAL COUNT PETER TOLSTOÏ.

The Tolstoï family is one of the most numerous in Russia; it is descended from a noble German family, which came to Russia in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. It has produced many distinguished men. The first count, Peter, (Andréovitch,) was one of the principal servants and favourites of the great reforming emperor.*

The member of the family the subject of this notice, says Prince Dolgorouki, "was everywhere respected for his integrity of conduct;" adding, that he was a "*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche.*"

Count Peter Alexandrovitch Tolstoï distinguished himself in youth by many brilliant actions during the campaign in Poland. At twenty-four years of age he was already decorated with the military order of St. George.

In the Italian campaign he acted as organ of communication between Suwarrow and the Archduke Charles. After the peace of Tilsit he remained a year as ambassador in Paris, and then retired into private life, which he abandoned on the breaking out of the war of 1812, when he again distinguished himself. He commanded the Russian reserve in the Polish campaign of 1831, and died in 1840, occupying at the time, as we have said, the post of president of the department of military affairs in the council of the empire.

He must not be confounded with the general of infantry, Count Alexander Ostermann Tolstoï,† who disembarked in 1805, on the coast of Hanover, and who lost an arm at the battle of Kulm in 1813; nor with the famous *Grand Maréchal de la Cour*, Count Foëder Andréovitch, who was ever ready to reprimand the Emperor Alexander, and was always perfectly at his ease in his company. He terminated his career by falling into disgrace, and died in 1825. He possessed a most valuable collection of manuscripts at Moscow.‡ By his wife, born Princess Bariatinski, he was connected with the house of Holstein-Beck.

* See Bantysch-Kamenski, "Siècle de Pierre le Grand."

† One of the sons of the celebrated Count Ostermann adopted his nephews, the sons of one of his sisters who was married to a General Tolstoï. Count Alexander died at Dresden in 1816, having been for a short time ambassador at Paris, before Pozzo di Borgo. Recently a Count Alexander Ivanovitch Tolstoï, general of infantry, was one of the aides-de-camp-general of the emperor. There are five or six other Counts Tolstoï in the imperial almanac.

‡ This collection has been described by Messrs. Kalaïdovitch and Stroïeff in a volume published at Moscow in 1825.

(Note 33). Page 421.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS CONCERNING THE INSURRECTION OF ST. PETERSBURG.

The extract from the journal of our travels was curtailed by mistake; in what followed there were some new details, which we will now give. We received them from the mouth of Colonel Velho, who was engaged on that day, (the 26th December,) and was one of those whose mutilated bodies attest the courage with which they supported the cause of their sovereign. We have been assured that Nicholas harangued the insurgents: that has never been proved. "What is it you want?" he was said to have asked them. "Have I not always been your affectionate prince? and if I am now your emperor, is it because I wished it, or because I have been forced to become so? Can you deny this? Here is my breast: strike if you dare!"

A fact which is undoubted, and which the colonel has confirmed, is, that, advancing with a dejected but firm look towards the horse-guards, the emperor addressed them:—

"My children, you see a band of misguided men in rebellion against their sovereign. Under pretence of preserving inviolate the oath they have taken to the Grand Duke Constantine, they are harbouring evil designs. I count upon you:—I am sure you will not fail me!" The regiment shouted "Lead us on! Forward! Nicholas for ever, hurrah! Hurrah for Nicholas!" and charged with impetuosity.

The emperor next approached another regiment, the colonel of which made the most favourable report as to the disposition of the soldiers. Turning to them he said, "I depend upon you; you will do your duty. *You* I know well; but for those rebels yonder, I know them not." Fresh huzzas were the reply.

Such was the conduct of the young autocrat on that memorable day: all the efforts of malignity cannot establish mere rumours to the contrary

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON:
Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

00029511

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 10 February, 2016